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# PARADISE LOST

A POEM,

IN TWELVE BOOKS

WRITTEN BY

JOHN MILTON.

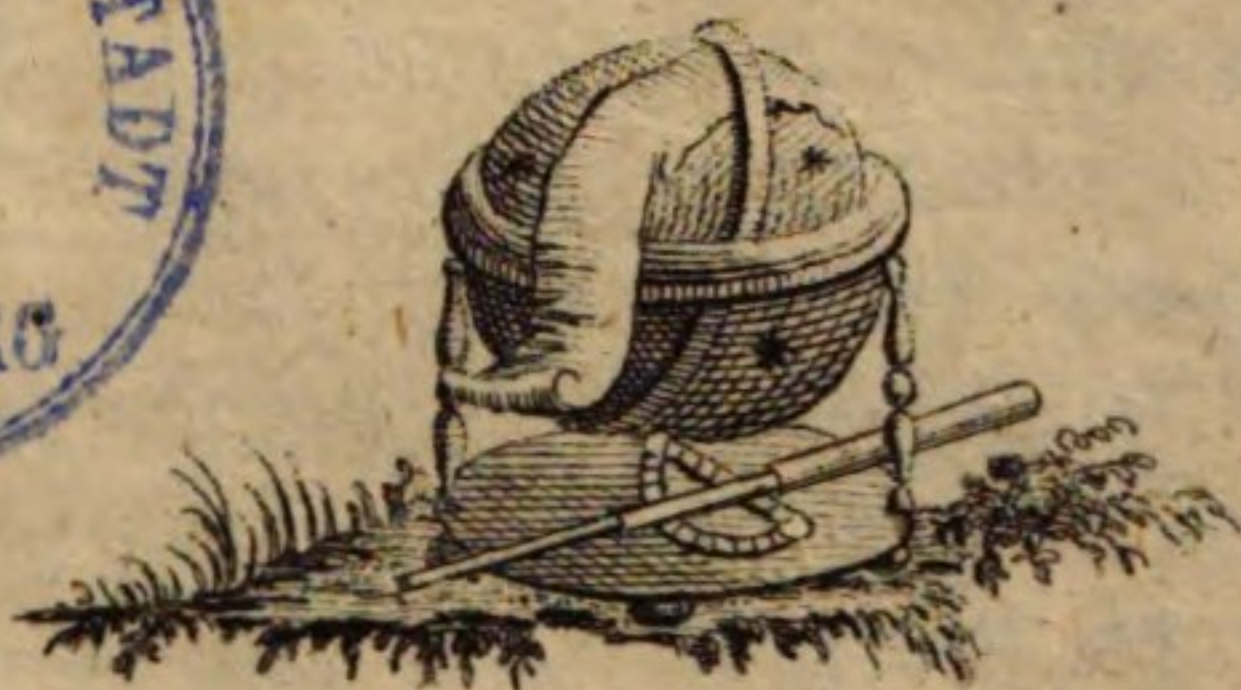
A new Edition, carefully corrected.

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Τον πέρι Μῆσ' ἐφίλησε, δίδε δ' ἀγαθόν τε, κακόν τε,  
Ὀφθαλμῶν μὲν ἄμερσε, δίδε δ' ἠδεῖαν ἀοιδήν.

HOMER Odyss. Θ.

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PARADISE LOST  
IN TWELVE BOOKS  
PARADISE LOST  
JOHN MILTON  
A new Edition, carefully corrected.

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man,  
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,  
Sing heavenly Mute, that on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,  
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth  
Rose out of Chaos. O if sin fall  
Delight thee more, and sinners' pleasures flow  
Faster by the oracle of God, I thank thee,  
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
That with no middle age must needs grow  
Above all human mould, nor wander far  
Things unutterable yet in words express'd,  
And chiefly Thou O Spirit, if thou dost prefer  
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,  
Alluding me, for I have grown from the first  
Wast distant, and with guile, with guile, and force,  
Dove-like, I have brooded on the vast Abyss,  
And mad if pregnant, what in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and show;  
For thou the deepest thoughts of my heart  
I may call to eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to Man.



# P A R A D I S E L O S T.

## B O O K I.

**O**f Man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat, 5  
Sing heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,  
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth  
Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion hill 10  
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd  
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues 15  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer  
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; I thou from the first  
Wast present, and with mighty wings out-spread 20  
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,  
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That to the height of this great argument  
I may assert eternal Providence, 25  
And justify the ways of God to Men.



Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,  
 Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause  
 Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,  
 Favor'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off 30  
 From their creator, and transgress his will  
 For one restraint, lords of the world besides?  
 Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?  
 Th' infernal Serpent! he it was, whose guile,  
 Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd 35  
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride  
 Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host  
 Of rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring  
 To set himself in glory above his peers,  
 He trusted to have equal'd the most High, 40  
 If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim  
 Against the throne and monarchy of God  
 Rais'd impious war in Heav'n and battel proud  
 With vain attempt. Him the almighty Power  
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky, 45  
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
 In adamantin chains and penal fire,  
 Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to arms.  
 Nine times the space that measures day and night 50  
 To mortal men, with his horrid crew  
 Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,  
 Confounded though immortal: But his doom  
 Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought  
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain 55  
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,  
 That witness'd huge affliction and dismay,  
 Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:  
 At once, as far as angels ken, he views  
 The dismal situation waste and wild; 60  
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round  
 As one great furnace flam'd, yet from those flames  
 No light, but rather darkness visible  
 Serv'd only to discover sights of woe;

Regions



Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace 65  
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes  
That comes to all; but torture without end  
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed  
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd:  
Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd 70  
For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd,  
In utter darkness, and their portion set  
As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n,  
As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.  
O how unlike the place from whence they fell! 75  
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd  
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
He soon discerns; and weltring by his side  
One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,  
Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd 80  
Beëlzebub. To whom th' Arch-enemy,  
And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words  
Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

If thou beest He; But O how fall'n! how chang'd  
From him, who in the happy realms of light 85  
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst out-shine  
Myriads tho' bright! If he whom mutual league,  
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope  
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,  
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd 90  
In equal ruin! Into what pit thou seest  
From what height fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd  
He with his thunder: and till then who knew  
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,  
Nor what the potent victor in his rage 95  
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,  
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind  
And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,  
That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,  
And to the fierce contention brought along 100  
Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,  
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,

His



His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd  
 In dubious battel on the plains of Heav'n,  
 And shook his throne. What tho' the field be lost? 105  
 All is not lost; th' unconquerable will,  
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
 And courage never to submit or yield,  
 And what is else not to be overcome;  
 That glory never shall his wrath or might 110  
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
 With suppliant knee, and deify his pow'r,  
 Who from the terror of this arm so late  
 Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,  
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath 115  
 This downfall; since by fate the strength of Gods  
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail,  
 Since through experience of this great event  
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,  
 We may with more successful hope resolve 120  
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,  
 Irreconcilable to our grand foe,  
 Who now triumphs, and in th'excess of joy  
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of heaven.

So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain, 125  
 Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:  
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.

O Prince, O chief of many throned Powers,  
 That led th' imbattel'd Seraphim to war  
 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds 130  
 Fearless, endanger'd Heav'n's perpetual king,  
 And put to proof his high supremacy,  
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;  
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,  
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat 135  
 Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty host  
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,  
 As far as Gods and heav'nly essences  
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains  
 Invincible, and vigor soon returns, 140

Though



Though all our glory extinct, and happy state  
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.  
But what if he our conqu'ror, whom I now  
Of force believe almighty, since no less  
Than such could have o'er-pow'r'd such force as ours,  
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire 146  
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,  
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,  
Or do him mightier service as his thralls  
By right of war, whate'er his business be, 150  
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,  
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;  
What can it then avail, though yet we feel  
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being  
To undergo eternal punishment? 155  
Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.

Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable  
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,  
To do ought good never will be our task,  
But ever to do ill our sole delight, 160  
As being the contrary to his high will  
Whom we resist. If then his providence  
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
Our labour must be to pervert that end,  
And out of good still to find means of evil; 165  
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps  
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb  
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.  
But see! the angry victor hath recall'd  
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170  
Back to the gates of Heav'n: the sulphurous hail  
Shot after us in storm, o'er-blown hath laid  
The fiery surges, that from the precipice  
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,  
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage, 175  
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now  
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.  
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,



Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.  
 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild, 180  
 The seat of desolation, void of light,  
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames  
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend  
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves,  
 There rest, if any rest can harbour there, 185  
 And re-assembling our afflicted Powers,  
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend  
 Our enemy, our own loss how repair,  
 How overcome this dire calamity,  
 What reinforcement we may gain from hope, 190  
 If not what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate  
 With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes  
 That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides  
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large 195  
 Lay floating many a rood: in bulk as huge  
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,  
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,  
 Briareus or Typhon, whom the den  
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast 200  
 Leviathan, which God of all his works  
 Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:  
 Him haply flamb'ring on the Norway foam  
 The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff  
 Deeming some island, oft, as sea-men tell, 205  
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind  
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night  
 Invest the sea, and wished morn delays:  
 So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay,  
 Chain'd on the burning lake, nor ever thence 210  
 Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will  
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven  
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,  
 That with reiterated crimes he might  
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought 215  
 Evil to others, and enrag'd might see

How



How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth  
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown  
On Man by him seduc'd, but on himself  
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd. 220  
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool  
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames  
Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires, and roll'd  
In billows, leave i'th' midst a horrid vale.  
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight 225  
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air  
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land  
He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd  
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;  
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force 230  
Of subterranean wind transports a hill  
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side  
Of thund'ring Aetna, whose combustible  
And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,  
Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds, 235  
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd  
With stench and smoke; Such resting found the sole  
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate,  
Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood  
As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength, 240  
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,  
Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat  
That we must change for heav'n, this mournful gloom  
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he 245  
Who now is sov'rain can dispose and bid  
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,  
Whom reason equall'd, force hath made supreme  
Above his equals. Farewell happy fields,  
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail horrors! hail 250  
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell  
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings  
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.  
The mind is its own place, and in itself



Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heaven. 255  
 What matter where, if I be still the same,  
 And what I should be, all but less than he  
 Whom thunder hath made greater? here at least  
 We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built  
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence: 260  
 Here we may reign secure; and in my choice  
 To reign is worth ambition tho' in hell:  
 Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.  
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends  
 Th' associates and copartners of our loss, 263  
 Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,  
 And call them not to share with us their part  
 In this unhappy mansion, or once more  
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet  
 Regain'd in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell? 270

So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub  
 Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,  
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,  
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge  
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft 275  
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge  
 Of battel when it rag'd, in all assaults  
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume  
 New courage and revive, tho' now they lie  
 Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280  
 As we ere while, astounded and amaz'd,  
 No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious height.

He scarce had ceas'd when the superior Fiend  
 Was moving toward the shore; his pond'rous shield,  
 Ethereal temper, massy, large and round, 285  
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference  
 Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose orb  
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views  
 At evening from the top of Fesolé,  
 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290  
 Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.  
 His spear, to equal which the tallest pine

Hewn



Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast  
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,  
He walk'd with to support uneasy steps 295  
Over the burning marle not like those steps  
On heaven's azure, and the torrid clime  
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire:  
Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach  
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd 300  
His legions, Angel-forms, who lay entranc'd,  
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades  
High over-arch'd embow'r; or scatter'd sedge 305  
Aflote, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd  
Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew  
Bustiris and his Memphian chivalry,  
While with perfidious hatred they persued  
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld 310  
From the safe shore their floating carcasses  
And broken chariot wheels: so thick bestrown  
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,  
Under amazement of their hideous change.  
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep 315  
Of hell resounded. Princes, Potentates,  
Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n, once your's, now lost,  
If such astonishment as this can seise  
Eternal Spirits; or have ye chos'n this place  
After the toil of battel to repose  
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320  
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?  
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
To adore the conqueror? who now beholds  
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood  
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon 325  
His swift pursuers from Heav'n gates discern  
Th' advantage, and descending tread us down  
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts  
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.  
Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n. 330  
They



They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung  
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch  
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,  
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.  
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight 335  
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;  
Yet to their General's voice they soon obey'd  
Innumerable. As when the potent Rod  
Of Amram's Son, in Egypt's evil day,  
Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud 340  
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,  
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung  
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:  
So numberless were those bad Angels seen  
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell 345  
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;  
Till, as a signal giv'n, th'up-lifted spear  
Of their great Sultan waving to direct  
Their course, in even ballance down they light  
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain; 350  
A multitude! like which the populous north  
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass  
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons  
Came like a deluge on the south, and spread  
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands. 355  
Forthwith from ev'ry squadron and each band  
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood  
Their great commander; God-like shapes and forms  
Excelling human, princely Dignities,  
And Pow'rs, that erst in heaven sat on thrones; 360  
Though of their names in heav'nly records now  
Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd  
By their rebellion, from the books of life.  
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve 364  
Got them new names, till wand'ring o'er the earth,  
Thro' God's high sufferance for the tryal of man,  
By falsities and lies the greatest part  
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake

God



God their creator, and th'invisible  
Glory of him that made them to transform 370  
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd  
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,  
And Devils to adore for Deities:  
Then were they known to men by various names,  
And various Idols thro' the Heathen world. 375  
Say, Muse, their names then known; who first, who  
Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery couch, (last,  
At their great emperor's call, as next in worth  
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,  
While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof. 380  
The chief were those who from the pit of Hell  
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix  
Their seats long after next the seat of God,  
Their altars by his altar, Gods ador'd  
Among the nations round, and durst abide 385  
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd  
Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd  
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,  
Abominations; and with cursed things  
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd, 390  
And with their darkness durst affront his light.  
First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood  
Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,  
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud  
Their children cries unheard, that pass'd through fire 395  
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite  
Worship'd in Rabba and her watry plain,  
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream  
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such  
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400  
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build  
His temple right against the temple of God  
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove  
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence  
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell. 405  
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,  
From



From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild  
 Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon  
 And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond  
 The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines, 410  
 And Eleäle to the Asphaltic pool.  
 Peor his other name, when he entic'd  
 Israel in Sittim on their march from Nile  
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.  
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd 415  
 Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove  
 Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;  
 Till good Iosiah drove them thence to Hell.  
 With these came they, who from the bord'ring flood  
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts 420  
 Aegypt from Syrian ground, had general names  
 Of Baälim and Ashtaroth; those male,  
 These feminine. For Spirits when they please  
 Can either sex assume, or both; so oft  
 And uncompounded is their essence pure, 425  
 Not ty'd or manacled with joint or limb,  
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,  
 Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose  
 Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,  
 Can execute their airy purposes, 430  
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.  
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook  
 Their living strength, and unfrequented left  
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down  
 To bestial Gods; for which their heads as low 435  
 Bow'd down in battel, sunk before the spear  
 Of despicable foes. Whith these in troop  
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd  
 Astarte, queen of Heaven, with crescent horns;  
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon 440  
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs,  
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood  
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built  
 By that uxorious King, whose heart tho' large,  
 Be-



Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell 445  
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,  
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd  
The Syrian Damsels to lament his fate  
In am'rous ditties all a summer's day,  
While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450  
Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood  
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale  
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,  
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch  
Ezekiel saw, when by the vision led 455  
His eyes survey'd the dark idolatries  
Of alienated Judah. Next came one  
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark  
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off  
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge, 460  
Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers;  
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man  
And downward fish: yet had his temple high  
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast  
Of Palestine, in Gath, and Ascalon, 465  
And Accaron, and Gaza's frontier bounds.  
Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful feat  
Was fair Damascus, on the fertil banks  
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.  
He also against the house of God was bold; 470  
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,  
Ahaz his sottish conqueror, whom he drew  
God's altar to disparage and displace,  
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn  
His odious offerings, and adore the Gods 475  
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd  
A crew who under names of old renown,  
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,  
With monstrous shapes and forceries abus'd  
Fanatic Aegypt and her priests, to seek 480  
Their wand'ring Gods disguis'd in brutish forms  
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape  
From



Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd  
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king  
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan, 485  
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,  
Jehovah, who in one night when he pass'd  
From Aegypt marching, equal'd with one stroke  
Both her first-born and all her bleating Gods.  
Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd 490  
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love  
Vice for itself; to him no temple stood  
Or altar smoak'd; yet who more oft than he  
In temples and at altars, when the priest  
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd 495  
With lust and violence the house of God?  
In courts and palaces he also reigns  
And in luxurious cities, where the noise  
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,  
And injury and outrage: and when night 500  
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons  
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.  
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night  
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door  
Expos'd a matron to avoid worse rape. 505

These were the prime in order and in might;  
The rest were long to tell, tho' far renown'd:  
Th' Ionian Gods, of Javan's issue held  
Gods, yet confess'd later than Heav'n and Earth,  
Their boasted parents. Titan, heav'n's first-born, 510  
With his enormous brood, and birthright feis'd  
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove  
His own and Rhea's son like measure found;  
So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete  
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top 515  
Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,  
Their highest Heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,  
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds  
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old

Fled



Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields, 520  
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking, but with looks  
Down-cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd  
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their Chief  
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost 525  
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast  
Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride  
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore  
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd  
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears. 530

Then strait commands that at the warlike sound  
Of trumpets loud, and clarions, be uprear'd  
His mighty standard: that proud honor claim'd  
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall;  
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd 535  
Th' imperial ensign; which full high advanc'd,  
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,  
Seraphic arms and trophies: all the while  
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds: 540

At which the universal host up sent  
A shout that tore Hell's concave; and beyond  
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.  
All in a moment thro' the gloom were seen  
Ten thousand banners rise into the air 545

With orient colours waving: with them rose  
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms  
Appear'd, and ferried shields in thick array,  
Of depth immeasurable: anon they move  
In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood 550

Of flutes, and soft recorders; such as rais'd  
To height of noblest temper Heroes old  
Arming to battel; and instead of rage,  
Deliberate valor breath'd, firm, and unmov'd  
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat; 555  
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage,  
With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase



Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,  
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they  
 Breathing united force, with fixed thought 560  
 Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd  
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil: and now  
 Advanc'd in view, they stand, a horrid front  
 Of dreadful length, and dazzling arms, in guise  
 Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield, 565  
 Awaiting what command their mighty Chief  
 Had to impose: he thro' the armed files  
 Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse  
 The whole battalion views their order due;  
 Their visages and stature as of Gods; 570  
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart  
 Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength  
 Glories: for never since, created man  
 Met such imbodied force, as nam'd with these  
 Could merit more than that small infantry 575  
 Warr'd on by cranes: tho' all the Giant brood  
 Of Phlegra with th' Heroic race were join'd,  
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side  
 Mix'd with auxiliar Gods: and what resounds  
 In fable or romance of Uther's son, 580  
 Begirt with British and Armoric Knights;  
 And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,  
 Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,  
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebifond;  
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore, 585  
 When Charlemain with all his Peerage fell  
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond  
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd  
 Their dread commander: he, above the rest  
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent, 590  
 Stood like a tow'r: his form had yet not lost  
 All her original brightness, nor appear'd  
 Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and th' excess  
 Of glory obscur'd: as when the Sun new-ris'n  
 Looks thro' the horizontal misty air, 595  
 Shorn



Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,  
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes Monarchs; darken'd so, yet shone  
Above them all th' Arch-Angel: but his face  
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care  
Sate on his faded cheek, but under brows  
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride  
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast  
Signs of remorse and passion to behold  
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,  
Far other once beheld in bliss, condemn'd  
For ever now to have their lot in pain;  
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd  
Of heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung  
For his revolt, yet faithful now they stood,  
Their glory wither'd: as when Heaven's fire  
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,  
With singed top their stately growth tho' bare  
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd  
To speak, whereat their doubled ranks they bend  
From wing to wing, and half inclose him round  
With all his Peers: attention held them mute:  
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice in spite of scorn  
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last  
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

O myriads of immortal spirits! O Pow'rs  
Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife  
Was not inglorious, tho' th' event was dire,  
As this place testifies, and this dire change,  
Hateful to utter: but what pow'r of mind,  
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth  
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,  
How such united force of Gods, how such  
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?  
For who can yet believe, tho' after loss,  
That all these puissant legions, whose exile  
Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend



Self-rai'd, and re-possess their native seat;  
For me be witness all the host of heav'n, 635  
If counsels different, or danger shunn'd  
By me, have lost our hopes: but he who reigns  
Monarch in Heav'n, 'till then as one secure  
Sate on his throne, upheld by old repute,  
Consent or custom, and his regal state 640  
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,  
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.  
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own;  
So as not either to provoke, or dread  
New war, provok'd; our better part remains 645  
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,  
What force effected not: that he no less  
At length from us may find, who overcomes  
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.  
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife 650  
There went a fame in Heav'n, that he ere long  
Intended to create; and therein plant  
A generation, whon his choice regard  
Should favour equal to the sons of Heav'n:  
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps 655  
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:  
For this infernal pit shall never hold  
Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th'abyss  
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts  
Full counsel must mature: peace is despair'd, 660  
For who can think submission? war then, war  
Open or understood must be resolv'd.

He spake: and to confirm his words out-flew  
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs  
Of mighty Cherubim: the sudden blaze 665  
Far round illumin'd Hell; highly they rag'd  
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms  
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,  
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heav'n.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670  
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire  
Shone



Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign  
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,  
The work of sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed  
A numerous brigad hasten'd: as when bands 675  
Of pioneers, with spade and pickax arm'd,  
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,  
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,  
Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell  
From Heav'n; for ev'n in Heav'n his looks and thoughts  
Where always downward bent; admiring more 681  
The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,  
Than ought divine or holy else, enjoy'd  
In vision beatific: by him first  
Men also, and by his suggestion taught, 685  
Ransack'd the center, and with impious hands  
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth,  
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew  
Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,  
And dig'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire 690  
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best  
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those  
Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell  
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,  
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame, 695  
And strength and art are easily out-done  
By spirits reprobate, and in an hour  
What in an age they with incessant toil  
And hands innumerable scarce perform.  
Nigh on the plain in many cells prepar'd, 700  
That underneath had veins of liquid fire  
Sluc'd from the lake, a second multitude  
With wondrous art found out the massy ore;  
Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross;  
A third as soon had form'd within the ground 705  
A various mold; and from the boiling cells  
By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook:  
As in an Organ from one blast of wind  
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.



Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710  
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound  
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,  
Built like a temple, where pilasters round  
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid  
With golden architrave: nor did there want 715  
Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven;  
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,  
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence  
Equal'd in all their glories, to inhline 720  
Belus, or Serapis their Gods, or seat  
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove  
In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile  
Stood fix'd her stately height, and strait the doors  
Opening their brazen folds, discover wide 725  
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth  
And level pavement: from the arched roof,  
Pendent by subtle magic many a row  
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed  
With Naphtha and Asphaltus, yielded light  
As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730  
Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise  
And some the architect: his hand was known  
In Heav'n by many a tow'rd structure high,  
Where scepter'd angels held their residence,  
And sat as Princes; whom the supreme king 735  
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
Each in Hierarchy, the orders bright.  
Not was his name unheard, or unador'd,  
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land  
Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell 740  
From Heav'n they fabled, thrown by angry Jove  
Sheer o'er the chrystal battlements; from morn  
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,  
A summer's day; and with the setting sun  
Dropt from the zenith like a falling star, 745  
On Lemnos th' Aegean isle; thus they relate,  
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout  
Fell



Fell long before; nor ought avail'd him now  
 T' have built in Heave'n high tow'rs; nor did he 'scape  
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent 750  
 With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Mean while the winged heralds by command  
 Of sov'reign pow'r, with awful ceremony  
 And trumpets found, throughout the host proclaime  
 A solemn council forthwith to be held 755  
 At Pandemonium, the high capital  
 Of Satan and his Peers: their summons call'd  
 From every band and squared regiment  
 By place or choice the worthiest; they anon  
 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came 760  
 Attended: all access was throng'd, the gates  
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall,  
 Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold  
 Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldans chair  
 Defy'd the best of Panim chivalry 765  
 To mortal combat, or career with lance,  
 Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air  
 Brush'd with the hiss of rustling winds. As bees  
 In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,  
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive 770  
 In clusters; they among fresh dewes and flowers  
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,  
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,  
 New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer  
 Their state affairs. So thick the aery croud 775  
 Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till, the signal giv'n,  
 Behold a wonder! they but now who seem'd  
 In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,  
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room  
 Throng numberless, like that pygmean race 780  
 Beyond the Indian mount, or fairy elves,  
 Whose midnight revels by a forest side  
 Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,  
 Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon 785  
 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth



Weehls her pale course; they on their mirth and dance  
 Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;  
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.  
 Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms  
 Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large, 790  
 Though without number still amidst the hall  
 Of that infernal court. But far within,  
 And in their own dimensions like themselves,  
 The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim,  
 In close recess and secret conclave sat; 795  
 A thousand Demi-gods on golden seats,  
 Frequent and full: after short silence then  
 And summons read, the great consult began,

*The End of First Book.*

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B O O K II.

High on a throne of royal state, which far  
 Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,  
 Or where the gorgeous east with richest hand  
 Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,  
 Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd 5  
 To that bad eminence; and from despair  
 Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires  
 Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue  
 Vain war with Heav'n, and by success untaught  
 His proud imaginations thus display'd. 10

Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n!  
 For since no deep within her gulph can hold  
 Immortal vigor, though oppress'd and fall'n,  
 I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent  
 Celestial virtues rising, will appear 15  
 More glorious and more dread than from no fall,  
 And trust themselves to fear no second fate.  
 Me though just right, and the fix'd laws of Heav'n  
 Did first create your leader, next free choice,  
 With what besides, in council or in fight, 20

Hath



Hath been achiev'd of merit, yet this loss  
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more  
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,  
Yielded with full consent. The happier state  
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw 25  
Envy from each inferior; but who here  
Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim  
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share  
Of endless pain? Where there is then no good 30  
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there  
From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell  
Precedence; none, whose portion is so small  
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind  
Will covet more! With this advantage then 35  
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,  
More than can be in Heav'n, we now return  
To claim our just inheritance of old,  
Surer to prosper than prosperity  
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way, 40  
Whether of open war or covert guile,  
We now debate; who can advise may speak.

He ceas'd, and next him Moloch, sceptred king,  
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit  
That fought in Heav'n, now fiercer by despair: 45  
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd  
Equal in strength, and rather than be less  
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost  
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,  
He reck'd not; and these words thereafter spake: 50

My sentence is for open war: of wiles,  
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those  
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now:  
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,  
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait 55  
The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here  
Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place  
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,



The prison of his tyranny who reigns  
 By our delay? No! let us rather choofe, 60  
 Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once  
 O'er Heav'n's high tow'rs to force refiftlefs way,  
 Turning our tortures into horrid arms  
 Against the torturer; when to meet the noise  
 Of his Almighty engin he fhall hear 65  
 Infernal thunder, and for lightning fee  
 Black fire and horrot shot with equal rage  
 Among his Angels; and his throne itfelf  
 Mix'd with Tartarean fulphur, and ftrange fire,  
 His own invented torments. But perhaps 70  
 The way feems difficult and fteep to fcale  
 With upright wing againft a higher foe.  
 Let fuch bethink them, if the fleepy drench  
 Of that forgetful lake benumb not ftill,  
 That in our proper motion we afcend 75  
 Up to our native feat: defcent and fall  
 To us is adverfe. Who but felt of late  
 When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear  
 Infulting, and perfued us through the deep,  
 With what compulfion and laborious flight 80  
 We funk thus low? th' afcent is eafy then;  
 Th' event is fear'd; fhould we again provoke  
 Our ftronger, fome worfe way his wrath may find  
 To our deftruction: if there be in Hell  
 Fear to be worfe destroy'd: what can be worfe 85  
 Than to dwell here, driv'n out from blifs, condemn'd  
 In this abhorred deep to utter woe;  
 Where pain of inextinguifhable fire  
 Must exercife us without hope of end,  
 The vaffals of his anger, when the fcourge 90  
 Inexorably and the torturing hour,  
 Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus  
 We fhould be quite abolifh'd and expire.  
 What fear then? what doubt we to incenfe  
 His utmoft ire? which to the height enrag'd, 95  
 Will either quite confume us, and reduce  
 To



To nothing this essential; happier far  
Than miserable to have eternal being:  
Or if our substance be indeed divine,  
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst 100  
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel  
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,  
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,  
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:  
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge. 105

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd  
Desperate revenge, and batrel dangerous  
To less than Gods. On th' other side up rose  
Belial, in act more graceful and humane:  
A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seem'd 110  
For dignity compos'd and high exploit:  
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue  
Dropt Manna, and could make the worse appear  
The better reason, to perplex and dash  
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low; 115  
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds  
Tim'rous and slothful; yet he pleas'd the ear,  
And with persuasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open war, O Peers,  
As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd 120  
Main reason to persuade immediate war,  
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast  
Ominous conjecture on the whole success:  
When he who most excels in fact of arms,  
In what he counsels and in what excels, 125  
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair  
And utter dissolution, as the scope  
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.  
First, what revenge? the tow'rs of Heav'n are fill'd  
With armed watch, that render all access 130  
Impregnable; oft on the bordering deep  
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing  
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,  
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way

By



By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise 135  
With blackest insurrection, to confound  
Heav'n's purest light; yet our great enemy  
All incorruptible would on his throne  
Sit unpolluted, and th' ethereal mould  
Incapable of stain, would soon expel 140  
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire  
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope  
Is flat despair: we must exasperate  
Th' Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,  
And that must end us, that must be our cure 145  
To be no more: sad cure! for who would lose,  
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,  
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,  
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost  
In the wide womb of uncreated night, 150  
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,  
Let this be good, whether our angry foe  
Can give it, or will ever? how he can,  
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.  
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire, 155  
Belike through impotence, or unaware,  
To give his enemies their wish, and end  
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves  
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?  
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed, 160  
Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal woe;  
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,  
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,  
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?  
What! when we fled amain, pursu'd and struck 165  
With Heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought  
The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd  
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay  
Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse.  
What if the breath that kindled those grim fires, 170  
Awak'd should blow them into sevenfold rage,  
And plunge us in the flames? or from above  
Should



Should intermitted vengeance arm again  
His red right hand to plague us? what if all  
Her stores were open'd, and this firmament 175  
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,  
Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall  
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps  
Designing or exhorting glorious war,  
Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd 180  
Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey  
Of racking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk  
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;  
There to converse with everlasting groans,  
Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd, 185  
Ages of hopeless end? this would be worse.  
War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike  
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile  
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye  
Views all things at one view? He from Heav'n's height  
All these our motions vain sees and derides; 191  
Not more almighty to resist our might,  
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.  
Shall we then live thus vile, the Race of Heaven  
Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to suffer here 195  
Chains and these torments? better these than worse,  
By my advice; since fate inevitable  
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,  
The victor's will. To suffer as to do,  
Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust 200  
That so ordains. This was at first resolv'd  
If we were wise, against so great a foe  
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.  
I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold  
And ventrous, if that fail them, shrink and fear 205  
What yet they know must follow, to endure  
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,  
The sentence of their conqueror: this is now  
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,  
Our supreme foe, in time may much remit 210  
His



His anger, and perhaps thus far remov'd  
 Not mind us not offending, satisfy'd  
 With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires  
 Will flaken, if his breath stir not their flames.  
 Our purer essence then will overcome  
 Their noxious vapor; or enur'd, not feel;  
 Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd  
 In temper and in nature, will receive  
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;  
 This horror will grow mild, this darkness light:  
 Besides what hope the never-ending flight  
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what change  
 Worth waiting, since our present lot appears  
 For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,  
 If we procure not to ourselves more woe.

Thus Belial with words cloath'd in reason's garb  
 Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth  
 Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.

Either to disenthroned the king of Heav'n  
 We war, if war be best, or to regain  
 Our own right lost. Him to unthrone we then  
 May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield  
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:  
 The former vain to hope argues as vain  
 The latter: for what place can be for us  
 Within Heav'n's bound, unless Heav'n's Lord supreme  
 We overpower? suppose he should relent  
 And publish grace to all, on promise made  
 Of new subjection: with what eyes could we  
 Stand in his presence humble, and receive  
 Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne  
 With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing  
 Forc'd hallelujahs; while he lordly sits  
 Our envy'd Sov'reign, and his altar breathes  
 Ambrosial odors, and ambrosial flowers,  
 Our servile offerings? This must be our task  
 In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisome  
 Eternity so spent in worship paid

To



To whom we hate! let us not then pursue  
By force impossible, by leave obtain'd 250  
Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state  
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek  
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own  
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,  
Free, and to none accountable, preferring 255  
Hard liberty, before the easy yoke  
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear  
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,  
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse  
We can create; and in what place so e'er 260  
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,  
Through labor and indurance. This deep world  
Of darkness do we dread? how oft amidst  
Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'n's all-ruling Sire  
Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd, 265  
And with the majesty of darkness round  
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar  
Must'ring their rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell?  
As he our darkness, cannot we his light  
Imitate when we please? this desert soil 270  
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold:  
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise  
Magnificence; and what can Heav'n shew more?  
Our torments also may in length of time  
Become our elements; these piercing fires 275  
As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd  
Into their temper: which must needs remove  
The sensible of pain. All things invite  
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state  
Of order, how in safety best we may 280  
Compose our present evils, with regard  
Of what we are and where, dismissing quite  
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd  
Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain 285  
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long  
Had



Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
 Sea-fearing men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance  
 Or pinnacle anchors in a craggy bay  
 After the tempest: such applause was heard 290  
 As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,  
 Advising peace: for such another field  
 They dreaded worse than Hell: so much the fear  
 Of thunder, and the sword of Michaël  
 Wrought still within them; and no less desire 295  
 To found this nether Empire, which might rise  
 By policy, and long process of time,  
 In emulation opposite to Heaven.  
 Which when Beëlzebub perceiv'd, than whom,  
 Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300  
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd  
 A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven  
 Deliberation sat, and public care;  
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,  
 Majestic though in ruin? sage he stood, 305  
 With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear  
 The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look  
 Drew audience and attention still as night  
 Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake.

Thrones, and Imperial Pow'rs, Offspring of Heav'n,  
 Ethereal Virtues; or these titles now 310  
 Must we renounce, and changing style, be call'd  
 Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote  
 Inclines, here to continue, and build up here  
 A growing empire: doubtless; while we dream, 315  
 And know not that the king of Heav'n hath doom'd  
 This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat  
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt  
 From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league  
 Banded against his throne, but to remain 320  
 In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd  
 Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd  
 His captive multitude: For he, be sure,  
 In height or depth, still first and last will reign



Sole King, and of his kingdom lose no part 325  
By our revolt; but over Hell extend  
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule  
Us here, as with his golden those in Heav'n.  
What fit we then projecting peace and war?  
War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss 330  
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none  
Vouchsaf'd or sought: for what peace will be giv'n  
To us enslav'd, but custody severe,  
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment  
Inflicted? and what peace can we return? 335  
But, to our power, hostility, and hate,  
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though flow,  
Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least  
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice  
In doing what we most in suffering feel? 340  
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need  
With dangerous expedition to invade  
Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,  
Or ambush from the deep: what if we find  
Some easier enterprize? there is a place, 345  
If ancient and prophetic fame in Heav'n  
Err not, another world, the happy seat  
Of some new race call'd Man, about this time  
To be created like to us, though less  
In pow'r and excellence, but favor'd more 350  
Of him who rules above: so was his will  
Pronounc'd among the Gods, and by an oath,  
That shook Heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.  
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn  
What creatures there inhabit, of what mold, 355  
Or substance, how endu'd, and what their pow'r,  
And where their weakness, how attempted best,  
By force or subtlety. Though Heav'n be shut,  
And Heav'n's high arbitrator sit secure  
In his own strength, this place may lye expos'd 360  
The utmost border of his kingdom, left  
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps



Some advantageous act may be atchiev'd  
 By sudden onset, either with hell fire  
 To waste his whole creation, or possess 365  
 All as our own, and drive, as we are driv'n,  
 The puny habitans; or if not drive,  
 Seduce them to our party, that their God  
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand  
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370  
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy  
 In our confusion, and our joy upraise  
 In his disturbance; when his darling sons,  
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse  
 Their frail original, and faded blifs, 375  
 Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth  
 Attempting, or to sit in darkness here  
 Hatching vain empires.—Thus Beëlzebub  
 Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd  
 By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence, 380  
 But from the author of all ill, could spring  
 So deep a malice to confound the race  
 Of mankind in one root, and earth with hell  
 To mingle and involve, done all to spite  
 The great Creator? but their spite still serves 385  
 His glory to augment. The bold design  
 Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy  
 Sparkl'd in all their eyes; with full assent  
 They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.

Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate 390  
 Synod of Gods! and, like to what ye are,  
 Great things resolv'd; which from the lowest deep  
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,  
 Nearer out ancient seat; perhaps in view 394  
 Of those bright confines, whence with neighbouring  
 And opportune excursion, we may chance (arms,  
 Re-enter Heav'n: or else in some mild Zone  
 Dwell not unvisited of Heav'n's fair light  
 Secure, and at the brightning orient beam  
 Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air, 400  
 To



To heal the scar of these corrosive fires  
Shall breathe her balm. But first whom shall we send  
In search of this new world; whom shall we find  
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandring feet  
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyfs, 405  
And through the palpable obscure find out  
His uncouth way, or spread his aery flight  
Upborn with indefatigable wings  
Over the vast abrupt, e'er he arrive  
The happy isle? What strength, what art can then 410  
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe  
Through the strict senteries, and stations thick  
Of Angels watching round? here he had need  
All circumspection; and we now no less  
Choice in our suffrage: for on whom we send, 415  
The weight of all and our last hope relies.  
This said, he sat; and expectation held  
His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd  
To second, or oppose, or undertake  
The perilous attempt: But all sat mute, 420  
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each  
In others count'nance read his own dismay  
Astonish'd: none, among the choice and prime  
Of those heav'n-warring champions, could be found  
So hardy, as to proffer or accept 425  
Alone the dreadful voyage: till at last  
Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd  
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride  
Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.

O Progeny of Heav'n, empyreal Thrones! 430  
With reason hath deep silence and demur  
Seiz'd us, though undismay'd: long is the way  
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light.  
Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,  
Outragious to devour, immures us round 435  
Ninefold: and gates of burning adamant  
Barr'd over us prohibit all egress  
These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound



Of unessential night receives him next  
 Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being 440  
 Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.  
 If thence he scape into whatever world,  
 Or unknown region, what remains him less  
 Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?  
 But I should ill become this throne, O Peers, 445  
 And this imperial sov'reignty, adorn'd  
 With splendor, arm'd with power, if ought propos'd  
 And judg'd of public moment, in the shape  
 Of difficulty or danger could deter  
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume 450  
 These Royalties, and not refuse to reign,  
 Refusing to accept as great a share  
 Of hazard as of honor, due alike  
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due  
 Of hazard more, as he above the rest 455  
 High honor'd fits? Go therefore mighty Pow'rs,  
 Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,  
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease  
 The present misery, and render Hell  
 More tolerable; if there be cure or charm 460  
 To respite or deceive, or slack the pain  
 Of this ill mansion. Intermit no watch  
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad  
 Through all the coast of dark destruction seek  
 Deliverance for us all: this enterprize 465  
 None shall partake with me.—Thus saying rose  
 The Monarch, and prevented all reply;  
 Prudent, lest from his resolution rais'd  
 Others among the chief might offer now,  
 Certain to be refus'd, what erst they fear'd; 470  
 And so refus'd might in opinion stand  
 His rivals, winning cheap the high reputation  
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they  
 Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice  
 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose: 475  
 Their rising all at once was as the sound  
 Of



Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend  
 With awful reverence prone; and as a God  
 Extol him equal to the highest in Heav'n:  
 Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,  
 That for the general safety he despis'd  
 His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd  
 Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast  
 Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites;  
 Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal.  
 Thus they their doubtful consultations dark  
 Ended, rejoicing in their matchless Chief:  
 As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds  
 Ascending, while the north-wind sleeps, o'er-spread  
 Heav'n's chearful face, the lowring element  
 Scowls o'er the darken'd landscape snow, or shower;  
 If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet  
 Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,  
 The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds  
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.  
 O shame to men! Devil with Devil damn'd  
 Firm concord holds; men only disagree  
 Of creatures rational, though under hope  
 Of heav'nly grace; and God proclaiming peace,  
 Yet live in hatred, enmity and strife  
 Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,  
 Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:  
 As if, which might induce us to accord,  
 Man had not hellish foes enow besides,  
 That day and night for his destruction wait.

The Stygian council thus dissolv'd, and forth  
 In order came the grand infernal Peers:  
 'Midst came their mighty Paramount, and seem'd  
 Alone th' antagonist of heav'n, nor less  
 Than Hell's dread Emperor, with pomp supreme,  
 And God-like imitated state: him round  
 A globe of fiery Seraphim inclos'd  
 With bright imblazonry, and horrent arms:  
 Then of their session ended they bid cry



With trumpets regal sound the great result: 515  
Tow'rd the four winds four speedy Cherubim  
Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy  
By heralds voice explain'd: the hollow Abyss  
Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell  
With deaf'ning shout return'd them loud acclaim. 520

Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd  
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers  
Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way  
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice  
Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find 525  
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain  
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.

Part on the plain, or in the air sublime  
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,  
As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields:  
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal 535  
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form.

As when, to warn proud cities, war appears  
Wag'd in the troubl'd sky, and armies rush  
To battel in the clouds, before each van 535

Prick forth the aery Knights, and couch their spears  
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms  
From either end of heav'n the welkin burns.

Others, with vast Typhoean rage, more fell  
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540  
In whirlwind: Hell scarce hold the wild uproar.

As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd  
With conquest, felt th' invenom'd robe, and tore  
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,

And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw 545  
Into th' Euboic sea. Others more mild,  
Retreated in a silent valley, sing

With notes angelical to many a harp  
Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall  
By doom of battel; and complain that fate 550

Free virtue should inthrall to force or chance.  
Their song was partial, but the harmony,

What



What could it less when spirits immortal sing?  
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment  
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet, 555  
For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,  
Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,  
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high  
Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,  
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute, 560  
And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.  
Of good and evil much they argued then,  
Of happiness and final misery,  
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,  
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy: 565  
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm  
Pain for a while, or anguish; and excite  
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast  
With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.  
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 570  
On bold adventure to discover wide  
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps  
Might yield them easier habitation, bend  
Four ways their flying march, along the banks  
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge 575  
Into the burning lake their baleful streams;  
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;  
Sad Acheron, of sorrow black and deep;  
Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud  
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegeton, 580  
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.  
For off from these a slow and silent stream,  
Lethe the river of oblivion rolls  
Her watry labyrinth; whereof who drinks,  
Forthwith his former state and being forgets, 585  
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.  
Beyond this flood a frozen continent  
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms  
Of whirlwind and dire hail; which on firm land  
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems 590  
Of



Of ancient pile; or else deep snow and ice,  
 A gulf profound, as that Serbonian bog  
 Betwixt Damyata and mount Casius old,  
 Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air  
 Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire. 595  
 Thither by harpy-footed furies hal'd  
 At certain revolutions all the damn'd  
 Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change  
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,  
 From beds of raging fire to starve in ice  
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine  
 Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,  
 Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire,  
 They ferry over this Lethéan sound  
 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,  
 And with and struggle as they pass, to reach  
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose  
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,  
 All in one moment, and so near the brink:  
 But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt 610  
 Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards  
 The ford, and of itself the water flies  
 All taste of living wight, as once it fled  
 The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on  
 In confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands 615  
 With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,  
 View'd first their lamentable lot, and found  
 No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale  
 They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,  
 O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 620  
 Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,  
 A universe of death, which God by curse  
 Created evil, for evil only good,  
 Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,  
 Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things, 625  
 Abominable, inutterable, and worse  
 Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,  
 Gorgons, and Hydra's, and Chimera's dire.

Mean



Mean while the Adversary of God and Man,  
 Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design,  
 Puts on swift wings, and tow'rd the gates of Hell  
 Explores his solitary flight; sometimes  
 He scours the right-hand coast, sometimes the left,  
 Now shaves with level wing the deep; then soars  
 Up to the fiery concave towring high.  
 As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd  
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds  
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles  
 Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring  
 Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood  
 Through the wide Ethiopian, to the Cape  
 Ply stemming nightly tow'rd the pole. So seem'd  
 Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear  
 Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,  
 And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass  
 Three iron, three of adamantin rock,  
 Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,  
 Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat  
 On either side a formidable shape;  
 The one seem'd woman to the waste, and fair,  
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold,  
 Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd  
 With mortal sting: about her middle round  
 A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd  
 With wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung  
 A hideous peal: yet, when they list, would creep,  
 If ought disturb'd their noise, into her womb,  
 And kennel there, yet there still bark'd, and howl'd  
 Within, unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these  
 Vex'd Scylla bathing in the sea that parts  
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:  
 Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, call'd  
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,  
 Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance  
 With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring Moon  
 Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,



If shape it might be call'd that shape had none  
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,  
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,  
For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night, 670  
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head  
The likeness of a Kingly crown had on.  
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat  
The monster moving onward came as fast 675  
With horrid strides. Hell trembled as he strode.  
Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,  
Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,  
Created thing not valued he nor shunn'd;  
And with disdainful look thus first began. 680

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,  
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance  
Thy miscreated front athwart my way  
To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,  
That be assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee. 685  
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,  
Hell-born; not to contend with spirits of Heav'n.  
To whom the goblin full of wrath reply'd,  
Art thou that traitor-Angel, art thou He,  
Who first broke peace in Heav'n, and faith, till then  
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms 691  
Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's sons,  
Conjur'd against the Highest; for which both thou  
And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd  
To waste eternal days in woe and pain? 695  
And reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of Heav'n,  
Hell-doom'd! and breath'st defiance here and scorn  
Where I reign King, and, to enrage thee more,  
Thy King and Lord? Back to thy punishment,  
False fugitive! and to thy speed add wings; 700  
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue  
Thy lingring; or with one stroke of this dart  
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So



So spake the grievly terror, and in shape,  
So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold 705  
More dreadful and deform. On th' other side  
Incens'd with indignation Satan stood  
Unterrify'd, and like a comet burn'd,  
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge  
In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair 710  
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head  
Level'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands  
No second stroke intend; and such a frown  
Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,  
With Heav'n's artill'ry fraught, come rattling on 715  
Over the Caspian; then stand front to front  
Hov'ring a space, till winds the signal blow  
To join their dark encounter in mid air:  
So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell  
Grew darker at their frown: so match'd they stood: 720  
For never but once more was either like  
To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds  
Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,  
Had not the snaky forceres that sat  
Fast by Hell-gate, and kept the fatal key, 725  
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O father! what intends thy hand, she cry'd,  
Against thy only son? What fury, O son,  
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart  
Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom; 730  
For him who sits above, and laughs the while  
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute  
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;  
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish pest 735  
Forbore; then these to her Satan return'd.

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange  
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand  
Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds  
What it intends; till first I know of thee, 740  
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd; and why

In



In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st  
 Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son:  
 I know thee not, nor ever saw till now  
 Sight more detestable than him, and thee. 745

T' whom thus the portress of hell-gate reply'd:  
 Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem  
 Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair  
 In Heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight  
 Of all the Seraphim, with thee combin'd 750  
 In bold conspiracy against Heav'n's King,  
 All on a sudden miserable pain  
 Surpriz'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swim  
 In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast  
 Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide, 755  
 Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,  
 Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd,  
 Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seiz'd  
 All th' host of Heav'n; back they recoil'd afraid  
 At first, and call'd me Sin; and for a sign 760  
 Portentous held me; but familiar grown,  
 I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won  
 The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft,  
 Thy self in me thy perfect image viewing,  
 Becam'st inamour'd, and such joy thou took'st 765  
 With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd  
 A growing burthen. Mean while war arose,  
 And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein remain'd,  
 For what could else, to our almighty foe  
 Clear victory; to our part loss and rout, 770  
 Through all the empyréan: down they fell  
 Driv'n headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down  
 Into this deep; and in the gen'ral fall  
 I also: at which time this powerful key  
 Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep 775  
 These gates for ever shut, which none can pass  
 Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat  
 Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb  
 Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,



Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes:  
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,  
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way  
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain  
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew  
Transform'd: but he my inbred enemy  
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,  
Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out Death!  
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd  
From all her caves, and back resounded, Death!  
I fled, but he pursued, though more, it seems,  
Inflam'd with lust than rage, and swifter far,  
Me overtook his mother, all dismay'd,  
And in embraces forcible and foul  
Ingendring with me, of that rape begot  
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry  
Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd  
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite  
To me; for when they list, into the womb  
That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw  
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth  
Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,  
That rest or intermission none I find.  
Before mine eyes in opposition sits  
Grim Death my son and foe; who sets them on,  
And me his parent would full soon devour  
For want of other prey, but that he knows  
His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I  
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,  
Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.  
But thou, O father! I forewarn thee, shun  
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope  
To be invuln'able in those bright arms,  
Though temper'd heav'nly; for that mortal dint,  
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the subtle Fiend his lore  
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.

Dear



Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy fire,  
 And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge  
 Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys  
 Theen sweet, now sad to mention, thro' due change 820  
 Befall'n us unforeseen, unthought of; know  
 I come no enemy, but to set free  
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain  
 Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host  
 Of spirits that, in our just pretences arm'd, 825  
 Fell with us from on high: from them I go  
 This uncouth errand sole; and one for all  
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread  
 Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense  
 To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold 830  
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now  
 Created vast and round, a place of bliss  
 In the pourlieus of Heav'n, and therein plac'd  
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply  
 Perhaps our vacant room; though more remov'd, 835  
 Lest Heav'n furcharg'd with potent multitude  
 Might hap to move new broils. Be this or ought  
 Than this more secret now design'd, I haste  
 To know, and this once known, shall soon return,  
 And bring ye to the place where Thou and Death 840  
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen  
 Wing silently the buxom air, imbalm'd  
 With odors: there ye shall be fed, and fill'd  
 Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.

He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death  
 Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear 846  
 His famine should be fill'd, and blest his maw  
 Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoic'd  
 His mother bad, and thus bespake her fire:

The key of this infernal pit by due, 850  
 And by command of Heav'n's all-powerful king  
 I keep; by him forbidden to unlock  
 These adamantine gates; against all force  
 Death ready stands to interpose his dart,

Fear-

; q p ;

o - || o - o - || o -

b : : d b : : d b :

p ; : q p ; : q p ;



Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might, 855  
But what owe I to his commands above  
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down  
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,  
To sit in hateful office here confin'd,  
Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nly-born, 860  
Here in perpetual agony and pain,  
With terrors and with clamors compass'd round  
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?  
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou  
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey 865  
But thee? whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon  
To that new world of light and bliss, among  
The Gods who live at ease, where I shall reign  
At thy right hand voluptuous, as befits  
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end. 870  
Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,  
Sad instrument of all our woe! she took;  
And towards the gate rolling her bestial train,  
Forthwith the huge Portcullis high up-drew;  
Which but her self, not all the Stygian Pow'rs 875  
Could once have mov'd: then in the key-hole turns  
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar  
Of massy iron, or solid rock, with ease  
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly  
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound 880  
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook  
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut  
Excell'd her pow'r; the gates wide open stood,  
That with extended wings a banner'd host, 885  
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through  
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;  
So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth  
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame!  
Before their eyes in sudden view appear 890  
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark  
Illimitable ocean, without bound,

With-



Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,  
And time, and place are lost; where eldest Night  
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold 895  
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise  
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.  
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,  
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring  
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag 900  
Of each his faction, in their sev'ral clans,  
Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,  
Swarm populous, un-number'd as the sands  
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,  
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise 905  
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,  
He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,  
And by decision more embroils the fray  
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter  
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss, 910  
The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,  
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,  
But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd  
Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,  
Unless th' almighty Maker them ordain 915  
His dark materials to create more worlds;  
Into this wild abyss the wary Fiend  
Stood on the brink of Hell, and look'd a while,  
Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith  
He had to cross: nor was his ear less peal'd 920  
With noises loud and ruinous, to compare  
Great things with small, than when Bellona storms,  
With all her batt'ring engines bent to rase  
Some capital city; or less than if this frame  
Of Heav'n were falling, and these elements 925  
In mutiny had from her axle torn  
The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans  
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke  
Uplifted spurns the ground: thence many a league,  
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930

Auda-



Audacious; but that feat soon failing, meets  
A vast vacuity: all unawares  
Flutt'ring his pennons vain, plumb down he drops  
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour  
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance 935  
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,  
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him  
As many miles aloft: that fury stay'd,  
Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,  
Nor good dry land: nigh founder'd on he fares, 940  
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,  
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.  
As when a gryphon through the wilderness  
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,  
Persues the Arimaspean, who by stealth 945  
Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd  
The guarded gold: so eagerly the Fiend  
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,  
With head, hands, wings or feet pursues his way,  
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies: 950  
At length a universal hubbub wild  
Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd,  
Borne through the hallow dark, assaults his ear  
With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,  
Undaunted to meet there whatever Power 955  
Or spirit of the nethermost abyfs  
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask  
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies  
Bordering on light; when strait behold the throne  
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread 960  
Wide on the wasteful deep; with him inthron'd  
Sate fable-vested Night, eldest of things,  
The consort of his reign; and by them stood  
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name  
Of Demogorgon: Rumor next and Chance, 665  
And Tumult and Confusion all imbroil'd,  
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.  
T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus.—Ye Powers,

D

And



And spirits of this nethermost abyfs,  
 Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy, 970  
 With purpose to explore or to disturb  
 The secrets of your realm, but by constraint  
 Wand'ring this darksome defart, as my way  
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,  
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek 975  
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds  
 Confine with Heav'n: or if some other place,  
 From your dominion won, th' ethereal king  
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive  
 I travel this profound, direct my course; 980  
 Directed no mean recompense it brings  
 To your behoof, if I that region lost,  
 All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce  
 To her original darkness, and your sway,  
 Which is my present journey, and once more 985  
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night;  
 Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.  
 Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,  
 With falt'ring speech and visage incompos'd,  
 Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art, 990  
 That mighty leading Angel, who of late  
 Made head against Heav'n's King, though overthrown.  
 I saw and heard, for such a num'rous host  
 Fled not in silence through the frightened deep  
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout, 995  
 Confusion worse confounded: and Heav'n gates  
 Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands  
 Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here  
 Keep residence; if all I can will serve  
 That little which is left so to defend, 1000  
 Encroach'd on still through our intestine broils,  
 Weakning the scepter of old Night: first Hell,  
 Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;  
 Now lately Heav'n and Earth, another world,  
 Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain, 1005  
 To that side Heav'n from whence your legions fell:

If



If that way be your walk, you have not far;  
So much the nearer danger: go and speed!  
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin are my gain.

He ceas'd; and Satan staid not to reply,  
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,  
With fresh alacrity and force renew'd  
Springs upward like a pyramid of fire  
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock  
Of fighting elements, on all sides round  
Environ'd, wins his way: harder beset  
And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd  
Through Bosporus, betwixt the jostling rocks:  
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd  
Charybdis; and by th' other whirlpool steer'd. 1020  
So he with difficulty and labor hard  
Mov'd on, with difficulty and labor he;  
But he once past, soon after when man fell,  
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain  
Following his track, such was the will of Heaven! 1025  
Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way,  
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf  
Tamely endur'd a bridge of wond'rous length,  
From Hell continued reaching th' utmost orb  
Of this frail world; by which the spirits perverse 1030  
With easy intercourse pass to and fro  
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom  
God and good Angels guard by special grace.

But now at last the sacred influence  
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven 1035  
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night  
A glimmering dawn: here Nature first begins  
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire  
As from her outmost works a broken foe  
With tumult less and with less hostile din; 1040  
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease  
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,  
And like a weather-beaten vessel holds  
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn:



Or in the emptier waste, resembling air, 1045  
 Weighs his spread wings, at leasure to behold  
 Far off th' empyreal Heav'n, extended wide  
 In circuit, undetermin'd square or round:  
 With opal tow'rs, and battlements adorn'd  
 Of living saphir, once his native seat; 1050  
 And fast by hanging in a golden chain  
 This pendent world, in bigness as a star  
 Of smallest magnitude, close by the moon.  
 Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,  
 Accurs'd, and in a curst hour he hies. 1055

*The End of the Second Book.*

*B O O K III.*

Hail holy Light, offspring of Heav'n first-born,  
 Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam  
 May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,  
 And never but in unapproach'd light  
 Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee, 5  
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate.  
 Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,  
 Whose fountain who shall tell? before the Sun,  
 Before the heav'ns thou wert, and at the voice  
 Of God, as with a mantle didst invest 10  
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
 Won from the void and formless infinite.  
 Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,  
 Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd  
 In that obscure sojourn; while in my flight 15  
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne  
 With other notes than to th' Orphéan lyre,  
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,  
 Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down  
 The dark descent, and up to re-ascend, 20  
 Tho' hard and rare. Thee I revisit safe,  
 And feel thy sov'reign vital lamp: but thou

Revi-



Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain  
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
So thick a *drop serene* hath quench'd their orbs, 25  
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more  
Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt,  
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,  
Smit with the love of sacred song: but chief  
Thee, Sion, and the flowry brooks beneath, 30  
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,  
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget  
Those other two equal'd with me in fate,  
So were I equal'd with them in renown,  
Blind Thamyras and blind Maeonides, 35  
And Tiresias, and Phineus Prophets old.  
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move  
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird  
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid  
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year 40  
Seasons return, but not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine:  
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark 45  
Surrounds me; from the chearful ways of men  
Cut off; and for the book of knowledge fair  
Presented with an universal blank  
Of nature's works, to me expung'd and ras'd,  
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50  
So much the rather thou, coelestial Light,  
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers  
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence  
Purge and disperse; that I may see and tell  
Of things invisible to mortal sight. 55

Now had th' almighty Father from above,  
From the pure empyréan where he sits  
High thron'd above all height, bent down his eye,  
His own works and their works at once to view:  
About him all the Sanctities of Heaven 60

Stood



Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd  
 Beatitude past utterance: on his right  
 The radiant image of his glory sat,  
 His only Son. On earth he first beheld  
 Our two first parents, yet the only two 65  
 Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,  
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,  
 Uninterrupted joy, unrival'd love  
 In blissful solitude. He then survey'd  
 Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there 70  
 Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night,  
 In the dun air sublime, and ready now  
 To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet  
 On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd  
 Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament, 75  
 Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.  
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,  
 Wherein past, present, future he beholds,  
 Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.

Only begotten Son, feelst thou what rage 80  
 Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds  
 Prescrib'd, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains  
 Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss  
 Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems  
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound 85  
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now  
 Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way  
 Not far off Heav'n, in the percincts of light,  
 Directly towards the new crated world,  
 And Man there plac'd; with purpose to assay 90  
 If him by force he can destroy, or worse,  
 By some false guile pervert, and shall pervert,  
 For man will hearken to his glozing lies,  
 And easily transgress the sole command,  
 Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall, 95  
 He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?  
 Whose but his own? Ingrate! he had of me  
 All he could have: I made him just and right,

Suf-



Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.  
Such I created all th' ethereal Powers 100  
And Spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd;  
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere  
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,  
Where only what they needs must do appear'd, 105  
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?  
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,  
When will and reason, reason also is choice,  
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,  
Made passive both, had serv'd necessity, 110  
Not me? They therefore as to right belong'd,  
So were created, nor can justly accuse  
Their maker, or their making, or their fate,  
As if predestination over-rul'd  
Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree 115  
Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed  
Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,  
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,  
Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.  
So without least impulse or shadow of fate, 120  
Or ought by me immutably foreseen,  
They trespass, authors to themselves in all,  
Bot what they judge and what they choose; for so  
I form'd them free, and free they must remain,  
'Till they inthrall themselves; I else must change 125  
Their nature, and revoke the high decree  
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd  
Their freedom, they themselves ordain'd their fall.  
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,  
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls, deceiv'd 130  
By th' other first: Man therefore shall find grace,  
The other none: in mercy and justice both,  
Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glory excel,  
But mercy first and last shall brightest shine.

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd 135  
All Heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect

Sense



Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:  
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen  
Most glorious; in him all his Father shone  
Substantially express'd; and in his face 140  
Divine compassion visibly appear'd,  
Love without end, and without measure grace,  
Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake.

O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd  
Thy sov'reign sentence, that man should find grace: 145  
For which both Heav'n and earth shall high extol  
Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound  
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne  
Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.  
For should Man finally be lost, should Man 150  
Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,  
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd  
With his own folly? that be from thee far,  
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge  
Of all things made, and judgest only right. 155  
Or shall the Adversary thus obtain  
His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil  
His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought,  
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,  
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell 160  
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,  
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself  
Abolish thy creation, and unmake  
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?  
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both 165  
Be question'd, and blasphem'd without defence.

To whom the great Creator thus reply'd.  
O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,  
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone  
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might, 170  
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all  
As my eternal purpose hath decreed.  
Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will,  
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me

Freely



Freely vouchsaf'd: once more I will renew 175  
His lapsed pow'rs, though forfeit and intrall'd  
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;  
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand  
On even ground against his mortal foe,  
By me upheld, that he may know how frail 180  
His fall'n condition is, and to me owe  
All his deliverance, and to none but me.  
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace  
Elect above the rest: so is my will:  
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd 185  
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes  
Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace  
Invites: for I will clear their senses dark,  
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts  
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. 190  
To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,  
Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,  
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.  
And I will place within them as a guide  
My umpire conscience: whom if they will hear, 195  
Light after light well us'd they shall attain,  
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.  
This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,  
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;  
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more, 200  
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall:  
And none but such from mercy I exclude.  
But yet all is not done: Man disobeying,  
Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins  
Against the high supremacy of Heav'n, 205  
Affecting God-head, and so losing all,  
To expiate his treason hath nought left,  
But to destruction sacred and devote,  
He with his whole posterity must die,  
Die he or justice must; unless for him 210  
Some other able, and as willing, pay  
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.



Say heav'nly Pow'rs, where shall we find such love?  
 Which of ye will be mortal to redeem  
 Man's mortal crime, and just, th' unjust to save? 215  
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?  
 He ask'd, but all the heav'nly quire stood mute,  
 And silence was in Heav'n: on man's behalf  
 Patron or intercessor none appear'd,  
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw 220  
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.  
 And now without redemption all mankind  
 Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell  
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,  
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine, 225  
 His dearest mediation thus renew'd.  
 Father, thy word is past, Man shall find grace;  
 And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,  
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,  
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230  
 Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?  
 Happy for Man, so coming; he her aid  
 Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;  
 Atonement for himself or offering meet,  
 Indebted, and undone, hath none to bring: 235  
 Behold me then; me for him, life for life  
 I offer, on me let thine anger fall;  
 Account me Man: I for his sake will leave  
 Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee  
 Freely put off, and for him lastly die 240  
 Well pleas'd, on me let Death wreak all his rage;  
 Under his gloomy pow'r I shall not long  
 Lie vanquish'd; thou hast giv'n me to possess  
 Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,  
 Though now to Death I yield, and am his due 245  
 All that of me can die: yet that debt paid,  
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave  
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul  
 For ever with corruption there to dwell;  
 But I shall rise victorious, and subdue 250  
 My



My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;  
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop  
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.  
 I through the ample air in triumph high  
 Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell; and show  
 The Pow'rs of darkness bound. Thou at the sight  
 Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,  
 While by thee rais'd I ruin all my foes,  
 Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave:  
 Then with the multitude of my redeem'd  
 Shall enter Heav'n long absent, and return,  
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud  
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd  
 And reconcilment; wrath shall be no more  
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire. 265

His words here ended, but his meek aspect  
 Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love  
 To mortal men, above which only shone  
 Filial obedience: as a sacrifice  
 Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will  
 Of his great Father. Admiration seisd  
 All Heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend  
 Wond'ring; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd.

O Thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace  
 Found out for mankind under wrath, O Thou  
 My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear  
 To me are all my works, nor Man the least  
 Though last created; that for him I spare  
 Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,  
 By losing thee a while, the whole race lost.  
 Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,  
 Their nature also to thy nature join;  
 And be thyself man among men on earth,  
 Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin-feed,  
 By wondrous birth: be thou in Adam's room  
 The head of all mankind, though Adam's son,  
 As in him perish all men, so in thee,  
 As from a second root, shall be restor'd



As many as are restor'd, without thee none.  
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit 290  
Imputed shall absolve them who renounce  
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds:  
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee  
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,  
Shall satisfy for man, be judg'd and die; 295  
And dying rise, and rising with him raise  
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.  
So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,  
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,  
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate 300  
So easily destroy'd, and still destroys  
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.  
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume  
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.  
Because thou hast, tho' thron'd in highest bliss 305  
Equal to God, and equally enjoying  
God-like fruition, quitted all to save  
A world from utter loss, and hast been found  
By merit more than birthright Son of God,  
Found worthiest to be so by being good, 310  
Far more than great or high; because in thee  
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds,  
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt  
With thee thy manhood also to this throne;  
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reig'n 315  
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,  
Anointed universal king; all power  
I give thee; reign for ever, and assume  
Thy merits: under thee as head supreme  
Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions I reduce:  
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that 'bide 320  
In Heav'n, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.  
When thou attended gloriously from Heav'n  
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send  
The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaim 325  
Thy dread tribunal: forthwith from all winds

The



The living, and forthwith the cited dead  
Of all past ages to the general doom  
Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep.  
Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge 330  
Bad men and Angels, they arraign'd shall sink  
Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,  
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while  
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring  
New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,  
And after all their tribulations long  
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,  
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth,  
Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,  
For regal sceptre then no more shall need, 340  
God shall be all in all. But all ye Gods,  
Adore him, who to compass all this dies,  
Adore the Son, and honor him as me.

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all  
The multitude of Angels with a shout 345  
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung  
With jubilee, and loud hosanna's fill'd  
Th' eternal regions. Lowly reverent  
Tow'rd's either throne they bow, and to the ground  
With solemn adoration down they cast  
Their crowns, inwove with amarant and gold,  
Immortal amarant! a flow'r which once  
In Paradise fast by the tree of life  
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence 355  
To Heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,  
And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of life,  
And where the river of bliss thro' midst of Heaven  
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream:  
With these that never fade the spirits elect 360  
Bind their resplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams,  
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off the bright  
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,  
Impurpled with coelestial roses smil'd.

Then



Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took, 365  
 Harps ever tun'd, that glitt'ring by their side  
 Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet  
 Of charming symphony they introduce  
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high,  
 No voice exempt; no voice but well could join 370  
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heav'n.  
 Thee, Father, first they sung, Omnipotent,  
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,  
 Eternal King; Thee Author of all Being,  
 Fountain of Light, thyself invisible 375  
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st  
 Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st  
 The full blaze of thy beams, and thro' a cloud  
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,  
 Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380  
 Yet dazle Heav'n, that brightest Seraphim  
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.  
 Thee next they sung of all creation first,  
 Begotten Son, Divine similitude!  
 In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud 385  
 Made visible, th' almighty Father shines,  
 Whom else no creature can behold: on thee  
 Impress'd, th' effulgence of his glory abides;  
 Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.  
 He Heav'n of Heav'ns, and all the pow'rs therein 390  
 By thee created; and by thee drew down  
 Th' aspiring Dominations. Thou that day  
 Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,  
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook  
 Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks 395  
 Thou drov'st of warring Angels disarray'd.  
 Back from pursuit thy Pow'rs with loud acclame  
 Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,  
 To execute fierce vengeance on his foes.  
 Not so on man: him thro' their malice fall'n, 400  
 Father of mercy and grace! thou didst not doom  
 So strictly; but much more to pity incline.

No



No sooner did thy dear and only Son,  
 Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man  
 So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd,  
 He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife  
 Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,  
 Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat  
 Second to thee, offer'd himself to die  
 For man's offence. O unexampled love! 410

Love no where to be found less than Divine!  
 Hail Son of God, Saviour of men! thy name  
 Shall be the copious matter of my song  
 Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise  
 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin. 415

Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry sphere,  
 Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.  
 Mean while upon the firm opacous globe  
 Of this round world, whose first convex divides  
 The luminous inferior orbs inclos'd 420  
 From Chaos, and th' inroad of Darkness old,  
 Satan alighted walks. A globe far off  
 It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent  
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night  
 Starless expos'd, and ever-threat'ning storms 425  
 Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky!  
 Save on that side which from the well of Heaven,  
 Tho' distant far, some small reflection gains  
 Of glimmering air, less vex'd with tempest loud.  
 Here walk'd the Fiend at large in spacious field. 430

As when a Vultur on Imaus bred,  
 Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,  
 Dislodging from a region scarce of prey  
 To gorge the flesh of lambs, or yeanling kids,  
 On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'rd the springs  
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;  
 But in his way lights on the barren plains  
 Of Sericana, where Chineses drive  
 With sails and wind their cany waggons light:  
 So on this windy sea of land, the Fiend 440

Walk'd



Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey;  
 Alone, for other creature in this place  
 Living or lifeless to be found was none;  
 None yet, but store hereafter from the earth  
 Up hither like aerial vapors flew, 445  
 Of all things transitory and vain, when sin  
 With vanity had fill'd the works of men:  
 Both all things vain, and all who in vain things  
 Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,  
 Or happiness in this or th' other life: 450  
 All who have their reward on earth, the fruits  
 Of painful superstition and blind zeal,  
 Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find  
 Fit retribution, empty as their deeds:  
 All th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand, 455  
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,  
 Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,  
 Till final dissolution, wander here,  
 Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd;  
 Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460  
 Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold  
 Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.  
 Hither, of ill-join'd sons and daughters born,  
 First from the ancient world those giants came,  
 With many a vain exploit, tho' then renown'd: 465  
 The builders next of Babel on the plain  
 Of Sennaar, and still with vain design  
 New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:  
 Others came single; he who to be deem'd  
 A God, leap'd fondly into Aetna flames, 470  
 Empedocles: and he who to enjoy  
 Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the Sea,  
 Cleombrotus: and many more too long,  
 Embryoes and idiots, Eremites, and Friars  
 White, Black and Gray, with all their trumpery. 475  
 Here Pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek  
 In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heav'n:  
 And they who, to be sure of Paradise,

Dying



Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,  
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd; 480  
They pass the Planets seven, and pass the fix'd,  
And that chrystalline sphere whose ballance weighs  
The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd;  
And now Saint Peter at Heav'n's wicket seems  
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot 485  
Of Heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo!  
A violent cross-wind from either coast  
Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry  
Into the devious air: then might ye see  
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers tost 490  
And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,  
Indulgences, Dispenses, Pardons, Bulls,  
The sport of winds. All these upwhirl'd aloft  
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off  
Into a Limbo large and broad, since call'd 495  
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown  
Long after: now unpeopled, and untrod.  
All this dark globe the Fiend found as he pass'd,  
And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam  
Of dawning light turn'd thither-ward in haste 500  
His travel'd steps; far distant he descries  
Ascending by degrees magnificent  
Up to the wall of Heav'n a structure high;  
At top whereof, but far more rich appear'd  
The work as of a kingly palace-gate, 505  
With frontispiece of diamond and gold  
Embellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems  
The portal shone, inimitable on earth  
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.  
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 510  
Angels ascending and descending, bands  
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled  
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz,  
Dreaming by night under the open sky,  
And waking cry'd, *This is the gate of Heav'n.* 515  
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood  
E There



There always, but drawn up to Heav'n sometimes  
 Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd  
 Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon  
 Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd, 520  
 Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the lake  
 Rap'd in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.  
 The stairs were then let down, whether to dare  
 The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate  
 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss: 525  
 Direct against which open'd from beneath,  
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,  
 A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,  
 Wider by far than that of after-times  
 Over mount Sion, and, though that were large, 530  
 Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear,  
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,  
 On high behests his Angels to and fro  
 Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard,  
 From Paneas the fount of Jordan's flood 535  
 To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land  
 Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shore;  
 So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set  
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.  
 Satan from hence, now on the lower stair 540  
 That scal'd by steps of gold to Heaven gate,  
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view  
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout  
 Thro' dark and desert ways with peril gone  
 All night, at last by break of chearful dawn 545  
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,  
 Which to his eye discovers unaware  
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land  
 First seen, or some renown'd metropolis  
 With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd, 550  
 Which now the rising Sun gilds with his beams:  
 Such wonder feis'd, though after Heaven seen,  
 The spirit malign; but much more envy feis'd  
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.

Round



Round he surveys, and well might, where he stood  
So high above the circling canopy 556  
Of night's extended shade, from eastern point  
Of Libra, to the fleecy star that bears  
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas  
Beyond th' horizon: then from pole to pole 560  
He views in breadth, and without longer pause  
Down right into the world's first region throws  
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease  
Through the pure marble air his oblique way  
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone 565  
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;  
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,  
Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,  
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,  
Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there 570  
He stay'd not to inquire. Above them all  
The golden sun, in splendor likest Heav'n,  
Allur'd his eye: thither his course he bends  
Through the calm firmament: but up or down,  
By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell, 575  
Or longitude, where the great luminary  
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,  
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,  
Dispenses light from far; they as they move  
Their starry dance in numbers that compute 580  
Days, months and years, tow'rd his all-cheering lamp  
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd  
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms  
The universe, and to each inward part  
With gentle penetration, though unseen, 585  
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;  
So wondrously was set his station bright.  
There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps  
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb  
Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw. 590  
The place he found beyond expression bright,  
Compar'd with ought on earth; metal or stone:



Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd  
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;  
 If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear: 595  
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,  
 Ruby or topaz, or the twelve that shone  
 In Aaron's breast-plate: and a stone besides,  
 Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,  
 That stone, or like to that, which here below 600  
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought,  
 In vain, though by their pow'rful art they bind  
 Volatil Hermes, and call up unbound  
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,  
 Drain'd through a limbec to his native form. 605  
 What wonder then if fields and regions here  
 Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run  
 Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch  
 Th' arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,  
 Produces, with terrestrial humor mix'd, 610  
 Here in the dark so many precious things  
 Of color glorious, and effect so rare?  
 Here matter new to gaze the Devil met  
 Undazled; far and wide his eye commands,  
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade, 615  
 But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon  
 Culminate from th'equator, as they now  
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round  
 Shadow from body opaque can fall, and th' air  
 No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray 620  
 To objects distant far, whereby he soon  
 Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,  
 The same whom John saw also in the sun:  
 His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;  
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar 625  
 Circled his head, nor less his locks behind  
 Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings  
 Lay waving round: on some great charge employ'd  
 He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.  
 Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope 630  
 To



To find who might direct his wand'ring flight  
To Paradise the happy seat of Man,  
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.  
But first he casts to change his proper shape,  
Which else might work him danger or delay: 635  
And now a stripling Cherub he appears,  
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face  
Youth smiled celestial, and to ev'ry limb  
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd.  
Under a coronet his flowing hair 640  
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore  
Of many a color'd plume, sprinkled with gold,  
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held  
Before his decent steps a silver wand.  
He drew not nigh unheard, the Angel bright, 645  
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,  
Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known  
Th' Arch-Angel Uriel, one of the sev'n  
Who in Gods presence, nearest to his throne  
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650  
That run thro' all the Heav'ns, or down to th' earth  
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,  
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.

Uriel, for thou of those sev'n spirits that stand  
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright, 655  
The first art wont his great authentic will  
Interpreter through highest Heav'n to bring,  
Where all his sons thy embassy attend:  
And here art likeliest by supreme decree  
Like honor to obtain, and as his eye 660  
To visit oft this new creation round:  
Unspeakable desire to see, and know  
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,  
His chief delight and favor, him for whom  
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd, 665  
Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim  
Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest Seraph, tell  
In which of all these shining orbs bath Man



His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,  
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell: 670  
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze,  
 Or open admiration him behold,  
 On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd  
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;  
 That both in him and all things, as is meet, 675  
 The Universal Maker we may praise;  
 Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes  
 To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss  
 Created this new happy race of Men  
 To serve him better: wise are all his ways. 680

So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd;  
 For neither Man nor Angel can discern  
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks  
 Invisible, except to God alone,  
 By his permissive will, through Heav'n and Earth: 685  
 And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps  
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity  
 Relinquishes her charge, while goodness thinks no ill  
 Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguil'd  
 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held 690  
 The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in Heaven:  
 Who to the fraudulent impostor foul  
 In his uprightness answer thus return'd.

Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know  
 The works of God, thereby to glorify 695  
 The great Work-master, leads to no excess  
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise  
 The more it seems excess, that led thee hither  
 From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,  
 To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps 700  
 Contented with report hear only in Heav'n:  
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,  
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all  
 Had in remembrance always with delight;  
 But what created mind can comprehend 705  
 Their number, or the wisdom infinite

That



That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?  
I saw when at his word the formless mass,  
This world's material mould, came to a heap;  
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar 710  
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd:  
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,  
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:  
Swift to their several quarters hasted then  
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire: 715  
And this ethereal quintessence of Heav'n  
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,  
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars,  
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;  
Each had his place appointed, each his course; 720  
The rest in circuit walls this universe.  
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side  
With light from hence, tho' but reflected, shines:  
That place is Earth, the seat of man, that light  
His day, which else as th' other hemisphere 725  
Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon,  
So call that opposite fair star, her aid  
Timely interposes, and her monthly round  
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heav'n,  
With borrow'd light her countenance triform 730  
Hence fills and empties, to enlighten th' earth,  
And in her pale dominion checks the night.  
That spot to which I point is Paradise,  
Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower.  
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires. 735

Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan bowing low,  
As to superior spirits wont in Heav'n,  
Where honor due and reverence none neglects,  
Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,  
Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success, 740  
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,  
Nor stay'd, till on Niphates top he lights.

*The End of the Third Book.*



## B O O K I V.

**O** for that warning voice, which he who saw  
 Th' Apocalyps heard cry in Heav'n aloud,  
 Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,  
 Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,  
*Woe to th' inhabitants on earth!* that now  
 While time was, our first parents had been warn'd  
 The coming of their secret foe, and scap'd,  
 Haply so scap'd his mortal snare: for now  
 Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,  
 The tempter e're th' accuser of mankind,  
 To wreck on innocent frail man his loss  
 Of that first battel, and his flight to Hell:  
 Yet not rejoicing in his speed though bold,  
 Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,  
 Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth  
 Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,  
 And like a devilish engine back recoils  
 Upon himself: horror and doubt distract  
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir  
 The Hell within him; for within him hell  
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell  
 One step no more than from himself can fly  
 By change of place: now conscience wakes despair  
 That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory  
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be  
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.  
 Sometimes tow'rs Eden, which now in his view  
 Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;  
 Sometimes tow'rs Heav'n and the full blazing sun,  
 Which now sat high in his meridian tow'r:  
 Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.  
 O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd,  
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God  
 Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars  
 Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,  
 But



But with no friendly voice, and add thy name  
O Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,  
That bring to my remembrance from what state  
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;  
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down  
Warring in Heav'n against Heav'n's matchless king.  
Ah wherefore! he deserv'd no such return  
From me, whom he created what I was  
In that bright eminence, and with his good  
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.  
What could be less than to afford him praise,  
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks;  
How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,  
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high  
I 'sdein'd subjection, and thought one step higher  
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit  
The debt immense of endless gratitude,  
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,  
Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd,  
And understood not that a grateful mind  
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once  
Indebted and discharg'd: what burden then?  
O had his pow'rful destiny ordain'd  
Me some inferior Angel! I had stood  
Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais'd  
Ambition. Yet why not? some other Power  
As great might have aspir'd, and me though mean  
Drawn to his part; but other Pow'rs as great  
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within  
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.  
Hadst thou the same free will and pow'r to stand?  
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then, or what, t'accuse,  
But Heav'n's free love dealt equally to all?  
Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,  
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.  
Nay curs'd be thou; since against his thy will  
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.  
Me miserable! which way shall I fly



Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?  
 Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;  
 And in the lowest deep a lower deep 75  
 Still threatening to devour me opens wide,  
 To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.  
 O then at last relent! is there no place  
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left?  
 None left but by submission; and that word 80  
*Disdain* forbids me, and my dread of shame  
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd  
 With other promises and other vaunts  
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue 85  
 Th' Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know  
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain;  
 Under what torments inwardly I groan,  
 While they adore me on the throne of Hell.  
 With diadem and sceptre high advanc'd, 90  
 The lower still I fall, only supreme  
 In misery; such joy ambition finds!  
 But say I could repent, and could obtain  
 By act of grace my former state; how soon 95  
 Would high recall high thoughts, how soon unfay  
 What feign'd submission swore! ease would recant  
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.  
 For never can true reconciliation grow  
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep:  
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100  
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear  
 Short intermission bought with double smart.  
 This knows my punisher; therefore as far  
 From granting he, as I from begging peace.  
 All hope excluded thus, behold in stead 105  
 Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,  
 Mankind created, and for him this world.  
 So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,  
 Farewel remorse! all good to me is lost;  
 Evil be thou my good! by thee at least 110  
 Divided empire with Heav'n's king I hold;

By



By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign:  
As Man e're-long, and this new world shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face  
Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy and despair;  
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd  
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.

For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul  
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,

Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm,  
Artificer of fraud; and was the first

That practis'd falsehood under faintly show,  
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:

Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive  
Uriel once warn'd; whose eye persued him down

The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount  
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall

Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce  
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,

As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen.  
So on he fares, and to the border comes

Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,

As with a rural mound, the champaign head  
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides

With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,  
Access deny'd: and over head up grew

Insuperable hight of loftiest shade,  
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,

A sylvan scene, and as the ranks ascend  
Shade above shade, a woody theatre

Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops  
The verdurous wall of Paradise up-sprung:

Which to our general sight gave prospect large  
Into his neather empire, neighb'ring round.

And higher than that wall a circling row  
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,

Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,  
Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colors mix'd:

On



On which the Sun more glad impress'd his beams. 150  
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,  
When God hath show'r'd the earth; so lovely seem'd  
That landscape! and of pure now purer air  
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires  
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive 155  
All sadness but despair: now gentle gales  
Fanning their odoriferous wings dispense  
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole  
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail  
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past 160  
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow  
Sabeian odors from the spicy shore  
Of Araby the blest; with such delay  
Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league  
Chear'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles: 165  
So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend  
Who came their bane; though with them better pleas'd  
Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume  
That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse  
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170  
From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.  
Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill  
Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;  
But further way found none, so thick entwin'd,  
As one continu'd brake, the undergrowth 175  
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd  
All path of man or beast that pass'd that way:  
One gate there only was, and that look'd east  
On th' other side: which when th' Arch-felon saw,  
Due entrance he disdain'd, and in contempt, 180  
At one flight bound high over-leap'd all bound  
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within  
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,  
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,  
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve 185  
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,  
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:

Or



Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash  
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,  
Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190  
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:  
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;  
So since into his Church lewd hirelings climb.  
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,  
The middle tree and highest there that grew, 195  
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life  
Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death  
To them who liv'd: nor on the virtue thought  
Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd  
For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge 200  
Of immortality. So little knows  
Any, but God alone, to value right  
The good before him, but perverts best things  
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.  
Beneath him with new wonder now he views 205  
To all delight of human sense expos'd  
In narrow room Natures whole wealth, yea more,  
A Heav'n on Earth! for blissful Paradise  
Of God the garden was, by him in th' east  
Of Eden planted; Eden stretch'd her line 210  
From Auran eastward to the royal towers  
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,  
Or where the sons of Eden long before  
Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil  
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd: 215  
Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow  
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;  
And all amid them stood the tree of life,  
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit  
Of vegetable gold: and next to life, 220  
Our death the Tree of knowledge, grew fast by;  
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill!  
Southward through Eden went a river large,  
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill  
Pass'd underneath ingulf'd, for God had thrown 225  
That



That mountain as his garden mold high rais'd  
Upon the rapid current, which through veins  
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,  
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill  
Water'd the garden; thence united fell 230  
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood  
Which from his darksome passage now appears,  
And now divided into four main streams,  
Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm  
And country, whereof here needs no account; 235  
Buth rather to tell how, if Art could tell,  
How, from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,  
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,  
With mazy error under pendent shades  
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240  
Flow'rs worthy of Paradise, which not nice art  
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon  
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,  
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote  
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade 245  
Imbrown'd the noon-tide bow'rs. Thus was this place  
A happy rural seat of various view:  
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums, and balm,  
Others whose fruit burnish'd with golden rind  
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true, 250  
If true, here only, and of delicious taste.  
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks  
Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,  
Or palmy hilloc, or the flow'ry lap  
Of some irriguous valley spread her store; 255  
Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose.  
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves  
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine  
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps  
Luxuriant: mean-while murm'ring waters fall 260  
Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,  
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd  
Her chrystal mirror holds, unite their streams.



The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,  
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune 265  
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,  
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,  
 Led on th' eternal spring. Not that fair field  
 Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,  
 Herself a fairer flow'r by gloomy Dis 270  
 Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain  
 To seek her thro' the world; nor that sweet grove  
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd  
 Castalian spring, might with this Paradise  
 Of Eden strive: nor that Nyseian isle 275  
 Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,  
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,  
 Hid Amalthea, and her florid son  
 Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye:  
 Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard, 280  
 Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd  
 True Paradise, under the Ethiop line  
 By Nilus' head, inclos'd with shining rock,  
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote  
 From this Assyrian garden; where the Fiend 285  
 Saw undelighted all delight, all kind  
 Of living creatures new to sight and strange.  
 Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,  
 Godlike erect; with native honor clad  
 In naked majesty, seem'd Lords of all, 290  
 And worthy seem'd: for in their looks divine,  
 The image of their glorious maker shone,  
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,  
 Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd,  
 Whence true authority in men: though both 295  
 Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;  
 For contemplation he and valor form'd,  
 For softness she and sweet attractive grace;  
 He for God only, she for God in him.  
 His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd 300  
 Absolute rule; and hyacinthin locks

Round



Round from his parted forelock manly hung  
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.  
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist  
Her unadorned golden tresses wore,  
Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd,  
As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd  
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,  
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,  
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,  
And sweet reluctant amorous delay.  
Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd;  
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame  
Of nature's works; honor dishonorable,  
Sin-bred! how have ye troubled all mankind  
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,  
And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,  
Simplicity and spotless innocence?  
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight  
Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill:  
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair  
That ever since in love's embraces met;  
Adam the goodliest man of men since born  
His sons the fairest of her daughters Eve.  
Under a tuft of shade, that on a green  
Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain side  
They sat them down: and after no more toil  
Of their sweet gard'ning labor than suffic'd  
To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease  
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite  
More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,  
Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs  
Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline  
On the soft downy banck damask'd with flowers.  
The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind  
Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;  
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles  
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as beseems  
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,

Alone



Alone as they. About them frisking play'd  
All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chase  
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;  
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw  
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,  
Gambol'd before them, th' unwieldy elephant  
To make them mirth us'd all his might, and wreath'd  
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent fly  
Insinuating, wove with gordian twine  
His braided train, and of his fatal guile  
Gave proof unheeded: others on the grafs  
Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing fat,  
Or bedward ruminating: for the sun  
Declin'd was hasting now with prone career  
To th' ocean isles, and in th' ascending scale  
Of Heav'n the stars that usher evening rose:  
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,  
Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.  
O Hell, what do mine eyes with grief behold!  
Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd  
Creatures of other mold; earth-born perhaps,  
Not spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright  
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue  
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines  
In them divine resemblance, and such grace  
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.  
Ah gentle pair, ye little thinck how nigh  
Your change approaches, when all these delights  
Will vanish, and deliver you to woe,  
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy:  
Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd  
Long to continue; and this high feat your Heav'n  
Ill fenc'd for Heav'n, to keep out such a foe  
As now is enter'd: yet no purpos'd foe  
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,  
Though I unpitied. League with you I seek,  
And mutual amity so strait, so close,  
That I with you must dwell, or you with me



Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not please,  
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such  
 Accept your maker's work; he gave it me, 380  
 Which I as freely give: Hell shall unfold,  
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,  
 And send forth all her kings: there will be room,  
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive  
 Your numerous offspring: if no better place, 383  
 Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge  
 On you who wrong me not for him who wrong'd.  
 And should I at your harmless innocence  
 Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,  
 Honor and empire with revenge enlarg'd, 390  
 By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now  
 To do, what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.

So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,  
 The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.  
 Then from his lofty stand on that high tree 395  
 Down he alights among the sportful herd  
 Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,  
 Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end  
 Nearer to view his prey, and unespied  
 To mark what of their state he more might learn 400  
 By word or action mark'd: about them round  
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;  
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spy'd  
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,  
 Straight couches close, then rising changes oft 405  
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,  
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both  
 Grip'd in each paw: when Adam first of men  
 To first of women Eve thus moving speech,  
 Turn'd him, all ear, to hear new utterance flow. 410

Sole partner and sole part of all these joys,  
 Dearer thyself than all! needs must the Pow'r  
 That made us, and for us this ample world,  
 Be infinitely good, and of his good  
 As liberal and free as infinite; 415

That



That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here  
In all this happiness, who at his hand  
Have nothing merited, nor can perform  
Ought whereof he hath need, he who requires  
From us no other service than to keep 420  
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees  
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit  
So various, not to taste that only tree  
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;  
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is, 423  
Some dreadful thing no doubt: for well thou know'st  
God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,  
The only sign of our obedience left  
Among so many signs of pow'r and rule  
Conferr'd upon us, and dominion giv'n 430  
Over all other creatures that possess  
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard  
One easy prohibition, who enjoy  
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice  
Unlimited of manifold delights: 433  
But let us ever praise him, and extoll  
His bounty, following our delightful task  
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flow'rs,  
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve reply'd. O thou for whom 440  
And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,  
And without whom am to no end, my guide  
And head, what thou hast said is just and right.  
For we to him indeed all praises owe,  
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy 445  
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee  
Praeeminent by so much odds, while thou  
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.  
That day I oft remember, when from sleep  
I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd 450  
Under a shade of flow'rs, much wond'ring where  
And what I was, whence thither brought and how.  
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound



Of waters issu'd from a cave, and spread  
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd 455  
Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went  
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down  
On the green bank, to look into the clear  
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.  
As I bent down to look, just opposite 460  
A shape within the watry gleam appear'd,  
Bending to look on me. I started back,  
It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd;  
Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answering looks  
Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd 465  
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,  
Had not a voice thus warn'd me, "What thou seest,  
"What there thou seest, fair Creature, is thyself;  
"With thee it came and goes: but follow me,  
"And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470  
"Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he  
"Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy  
"Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear  
"Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd  
"Mother of human race." What could I do, 475  
But follow straight, invisibly thus led?  
Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,  
Under a plantan, yet methought less fair,  
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,  
Than that smooth watry image: back I turn'd; 480  
Thou following cry'dst aloud, Return fair Eve,  
Whom fly'st thou? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,  
His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent  
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart  
Substantial life, to have thee by my side 485  
Henceforth an individual solace dear.  
Part of my soul, I seek thee, and thee claim  
My other half!——with that thy gentle hand  
Seis'd mine, I yielded, and from that time see  
How beauty is excell'd by manly grace 490  
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So



So spake our general mother, and with eyes  
Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,  
And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd  
On our first father; half her swelling breast 495  
Naked met his under the flowing gold  
Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight  
Both of her beauty and submissive charms  
Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter  
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds 500  
That shed May flow'rs; and press'd her matron lip  
With kisses pure: aside the Devil turn'd  
For envy, yet with jealous leer malign  
Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd.

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two 550  
Imparadis'd in one another's arms,  
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill  
Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,  
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,  
Among our other torments not the least, 510  
Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.  
Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd  
From their own mouths; all is not theirs it seems:  
One fatal Tree there stands of knowledge call'd,  
Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden? 515  
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord  
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?  
Can it be death? and do they only stand  
By ignorance? is that their happy state,  
The proof of their obedience and their faith? 520  
O fair foundation laid whereon to build  
Their ruin! hence I will excite their minds  
With more desire to know, and to reject  
Envious commands, invented with design  
To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt 525  
Equal with Gods: aspiring to be such,  
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?  
But first with narrow search I must walk round  
This garden, and no corner leave unspy'd;



A chance but chance may lead where I may meet 530  
 Some wandring Spirit of Heav'n, by fountain side,  
 Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw  
 What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may  
 Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,  
 Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed. 535

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,  
 But with fly circumspection, and began  
 Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale his roam.  
 Mean-while in utmost longitude, where Heav'n  
 With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540  
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect  
 Against the eastern gate of Paradise  
 Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock  
 Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,  
 Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent 545  
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high;  
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung  
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.  
 Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,  
 Chief of th' Angelic guards, awaiting night: 550  
 About him exercis'd heroic games  
 Th' unarmed youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand  
 Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears,  
 Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.  
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the ev'n 555  
 On a Sun beam, swift as a shooting star  
 In Autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fir'd  
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner  
 From what point of his Compass to beware  
 Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste. 560

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath giv'n  
 Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place  
 No evil thing approach, or enter in.  
 This day at hight of noon came to my sphere  
 A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know 565  
 More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly man,  
 God's latest image: I describ'd his way

Bent



Bent all on speed, and mark'd his aery gait:  
But in the mount that lies from Eden north,  
Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks 570  
Alien from Heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:  
Mine eye persued him still, but under shade  
Lost sight of him; one of the banish'd crew,  
I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep to raise  
New troubles; him thy care must be to find. 575

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd:  
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,  
Amid the Sun's bright circle where thou sit'st,  
See far and wide: in at this gate none pass  
The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come 580  
Well known from Heav'n; and since meridian hour  
No creature thence. If spirit of other sort,  
So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthly bounds  
On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude  
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar. 585  
But if within the circuit of these walks,  
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom  
Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis'd he, and Uriel to his charge  
Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd 590  
Bore him slope downward to the Sun, now fall'n  
Beneath th' Azores; whether the prime orb,  
Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd  
Diurnal, or this less volubil earth  
By shorter flight to th' east, had left him there 595  
Arraying with reflected purple and gold,  
The clouds that on his western throne attend.  
Now came still evening on, and twilight gray  
Had in her sober livery all things clad;  
Silence accompany'd, for beast and bird, 600  
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests  
Were flunk; all but the wakeful nightingale:  
She all night long her amorous descant sung;  
Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the firmament  
With living saphirs: Hesperus, that led 605



The starry host rode brightest, till the moon  
Rising in clouded majesty at length,  
Apparent Queen, unveil'd her peerless light,  
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw;

When Adam thus to Eve. Fair consort, th' hour 610  
Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest  
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set  
Labor and rest, as day and night to men  
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep  
Now falling with soft flumbrous weight, inclines 615  
Our eye-lids: other creatures all day long  
Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest:  
Man hath his daily work of body, or mind  
Appointed, which declares his dignity,  
And the regard of Heav'n on all his ways: 620  
While other animals unactive range,  
And of their doings God takes no account.

To-morrow, e're fresh morning streak the east  
With first approach of light, we must be ris'n,  
And at our pleasant labor, to reform 625  
Yon flow'ry arbors, yonder alleys green  
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown;  
That mock our scant manuring, and require  
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth.  
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums, 630  
That lie bestrown unsightly and unsmooth,  
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease:  
Mean while, as nature wills, night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve with perfect beauty adorn'd:  
My author and disposer, what thou bidst 635  
Unargu'd I obey; so God ordains;  
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more  
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.  
With thee conversing I forget all time;  
All seasons and their change, all please alike.  
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,  
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the Sun,  
When first on this delightful land he spreads

His



His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r,  
Glist'ring with dew: fragrant the fertile earth 645  
After soft show'rs: and sweet the coming on  
Of grateful ev'ning mild: then silent night  
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,  
And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train.  
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends 650  
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising Sun  
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flow'r,  
Glistring with dew; nor fragrance after showers;  
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night  
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon, 655  
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.  
But wherefore all night long shine these, for whom  
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?

To whom our general ancestor reply'd;  
Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve, 660  
These have their course to finish, round the earth,  
By morrow ev'ning, and from land to land  
In order, though to nations yet unborn,  
Ministring light prepar'd, they set and rise;  
Lest total darkness should by night regain 665  
Her old possession, and extinguish life  
In nature and all things; which these soft fires  
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat  
Of various influence foment and warm,  
Temper or nourish; or in part shed down 670  
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow  
On earth; made hereby apter to receive  
Perfection from the Sun's more potent ray.  
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,  
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,  
That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise:  
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth  
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep.  
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold  
Both day and night: how often from the steep 680  
Of echoing hill, or thicket, have we heard



Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,  
Singing their great Creator; oft in bands  
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk 685  
With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds,  
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs  
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.

Thus talking, hand in hand, alone they pass'd  
On to their blissful Bow'r: it was a place 690  
Chos'n by the sov'reign planter, when he fram'd  
All things to man's delightful use: the roof  
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade  
Laurel and myrtle; and what higher grew  
Of firm and fragrant leaf, on either side 693  
Acanthus, and each od'rous bushy shrub  
Fenc'd up the verdant wall: each beauteous flow'r,  
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,  
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought  
Mosaic; underfoot the violet, 700  
Crocus and hyacinth, with rich inlay  
Broider'd the ground, more color'd than with stone  
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,  
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;  
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bow'r 705  
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,  
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph,  
Nor faunus haunted. Here in close recess  
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,  
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed, 710  
And heav'nly quires the hymenaeal sung;  
What day the genial Angel to our fire  
Brought her in naked beauty, more adorn'd,  
More lovely than Pandora, whom the Gods  
Endow'd with all their gifts, and O, too like 715  
In sad event! when to th' unwiser son  
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she insnar'd  
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd  
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus



Thus at their shady Lodge arriv'd, both stood, 720  
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd  
The God that made both sky, air, earth and heav'n,  
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,  
And starry pole: Thou also mad'st the night,  
Maker omnipotent, and thou the day 725  
Which we in our appointed work employ'd  
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help  
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss  
Ordain'd by thee, and this delicious place  
For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730  
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.  
But thou hast promis'd from us two a race  
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol  
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep. 735

This said unanimous, and other rites  
Observing none, but adoration pure,  
Which God likes best, into their inmost bow'r  
Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off  
These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740  
Straight side by side were laid: nor turn'd I ween  
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites  
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:  
Whatever hypocrites austere talk  
Of purity and place and innocence, 745  
Defaming as impure what God declares  
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.  
Our maker bids increase; who bids abstain  
But our destroyer, foe to God and man?  
Hail wedded love! mysterious law, true source 750  
Of human offspring, sole propriety  
In Paradise, of all things common else.  
By thee adult'rous lust was driv'n from men,  
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,  
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,  
Relations dear, and all the charities  
Of father, son, and brother first were known.



Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame;  
 Or think thee unbecoming holiest place,  
 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets! 760  
 Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,  
 Present, or past, as Saints and Patriarchs us'd.  
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights  
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,  
 Reigns here and revels: not in the bought smile 765  
 Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,  
 Casual fruition, nor in court amours,  
 Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,  
 Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings  
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770  
 These, lull'd by nightingales embracing slept,  
 And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof  
 Shower'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on  
 Blest pair; and O! yet happiest, if ye seek  
 No happier state, and know to know no more. 775

Now had night measur'd with her shadowy cone  
 Half-way up hill this vast sublunar vault,  
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim  
 Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour flood arm'd  
 To their night watches in warlike parade, 780  
 When Gabriel to his next in pow'r thus spake.

Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south  
 With strictest watch: these other wheel the north,  
 Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part  
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear. 785  
 From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd,  
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.

Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed  
 Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook:  
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790  
 Now laid perhaps asleep secure of harm.  
 This evening from the Sun's decline arriv'd,  
 Who tells of some infernal spirit seen  
 Hitherward bent, who could have thought? escap'd  
 The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt: 795

Such



Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.

So saying, on he led his radiant files,  
Dazling the moon; these to the bow'r direct,  
In search of whom they fought: him there they found  
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve; 800

Assaying by his devilish art to reach  
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge  
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams:

Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint

Th' animal spirits, that from pure blood arise 805

Like gentle breaths from rivers pure; thence raise

At east distemper'd, discontented thoughts,

Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,

Blown up with high conceits ingendring pride.

Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810

Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can indure

Touch of coelestial temper, but returns

Of force to its own likeness, up he starts

Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark

Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid 815

Fit for the tun, some magazine to store

Against a rumor'd war, the smutty grain

With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air:

So started up in his own shape the Fiend.

Back stept those two fair angels half amaz'd 820

So sudden to behold the grisly King;

Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon.

Which of those rebel spirits adjudg'd to Hell

Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison? and transform'd,

Why sat'st thou, like an enemy in wait, 825

Here watching at the head of these that sleep?

Known ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,

Know ye not Me? ye knew me once no mate

For you, there sitting where you durst not soar;

Not to know me argues yourselves unknown, 830

The lowest of your throng: or if ye know,

Why ask ye, and superfluous begin

Your message, like to end as much in vain?

To



To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn,  
Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same, 835  
Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,  
As when thou stood'st in Heav'n upright and pure:  
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,  
Departed from thee; and thou resembl'st now  
Thy sin and place of doom, obscure and foul. 840  
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account  
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep  
This place inviolable, and these from harm.

So spake the Cherub, and his grave rebuke,  
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace 845  
Invincible: abash'd the Devil stood,  
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw  
Virtue in her shape how lovely, saw and pin'd,  
His loss: but chiefly to find here observ'd  
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd 850  
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,  
Best with the best, the sender not the sent,  
Or all at once; more glory will be won,  
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,  
Will save us trial what the least can do 855  
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.

The Fiend reply'd not, overcome with rage;  
But like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,  
Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly  
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd 860  
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh  
The western point, where those half-rounding guards  
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,  
Awaiting next command; to whom their Chief,  
Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud. 865

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet  
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern  
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,  
And with them comes a third of regal port,  
But faded splendor wan, who by his gait 870  
And fierce demeanor seems the Prince of Hell;

Not



Not likely to part hence without contest:  
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.

He scarce had ended when those two approach'd,  
And brief related whom they brought, where found,  
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.  
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.

Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd  
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge  
Of others, who approve not to transgress 880  
By thy example, but have pow'r and right  
To question thy bold entrance on this place;  
Employ'd it seems to violate sleep, and those  
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow. 885  
Gabriel, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem of wise,  
And such I held thee; but this question ask'd  
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?  
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,  
Tho' thither doom'd? thou would'st thyself, no doubt,  
And boldly venture to whatever place,  
Farthest from pain; where thou might'st hope to change  
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense  
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought:  
To thee no reason, who know'st only good, 895  
But evil hast not try'd. And wilt object  
His will who bound us? let him surer bar  
His iron gates, if he intends our stay  
In that dark durance! thus much what was ask'd.  
The rest is true: they found me where they say; 900  
But that implies not violence, or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel mov'd,  
Disdainfully half smiling, thus reply'd.  
O loss of one in Heav'n to judge of wise,  
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew! 905  
And now returns him from his prison scap'd,  
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise  
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither  
Unlicens'd from his bounds in Hell prescrib'd;

So



So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910  
However, and to scape his punishment.

So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,  
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight  
Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,  
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain 915  
Can equal anger infinite provok'd.

But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee  
Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them  
Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they  
Less hardy to indure? courageous chief! 920  
The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alledg'd  
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,  
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.

To which the Fiend thus answer'd frowning stern.

Not that I less indure, or shrink from pain, 925

Insulting Angel, well thou know'st; I stood

The fiercest, when in battel to thy aid

The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,

And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.

But still thy words at random, as before, 930

Argue thy inexperience what behoves

From hard assays and ill successes past,

A faithful leader, not to hazard all

Through ways of danger by himself untry'd:

I therefore, I alone first undertook 935

To wing the desolate Abyss, and spy

This new created world, whereof in Hell

Fame is not silent; here in hope to find

Better abode, and my afflicted Pow'rs

To settle here on earth, or in mid air; 940

Though, for possession, put to try once more

What thou and thy gay legions dare against;

Whose easier business were to serve their Lord

High up in Heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,

And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight. 945

To whom the warrior Angel soon reply'd:

To say, and straight unsay, pretending first

Wife



Wife to fly pain, professing next the spy,  
 Argues no leader but a liar trac'd,  
 Satan! and couldst thou *faithful* add? O name, 950  
 O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!  
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?  
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.  
 Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,  
 Your military obedience, to dissolve 955  
 Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Pow'r supreme?  
 And thou, fly hypocrite! who now wouldst seem  
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou  
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servily ador'd  
 Heav'n's awful Monarch? wherefore but in hope 960  
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?  
 But mark what I arreed thee now: avant!  
 Fly thither whence thou fledst: if from this hour  
 Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,  
 Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd, 965  
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn  
 The facil gates of Hell too slightly barr'd.

So threaten'd he, but Satan to no threats  
 Gave heed, but waxin more in rage reply'd.

Then when I am thy captive talk of chains, 970  
 Proud limitary Cherub, but e're then  
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel  
 From my prevailing arm; though Heaven's King  
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,  
 Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels 975  
 In progress through the road of Heav'n star-pav'd.

While thus he spake, th' Angelic Squadron bright  
 Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns  
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round  
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field 980  
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends  
 Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind  
 Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands,  
 Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves  
 Prove chaff. On th' other side Satan alarm'd, 985



Collecting all his might dilated stood  
 Like Teneriff, or Atlas, unremov'd:  
 His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest  
 Sat horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp  
 What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds  
 Might have ensu'd, nor only Paradise  
 In this commotion, but the starry cope  
 Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the elements  
 At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn  
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon 995  
 Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray  
 Hung forth in Heav'n his golden scales, yet seen  
 Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,  
 Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,  
 The pendulous round earth with ballanc'd air 1000  
 In counterpoise; now ponders all events,  
 Battels and realms: in these he put two weights  
 The sequel each of parting and of fight;  
 The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam:  
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend. 1005

Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,  
 Neither our own but giv'n: what folly then  
 To boast what arms can do, since thine no more  
 Than Heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now  
 To trample thee as mire: for proof look up, 1010  
 And read thy lot in yon coelestial sign,  
 Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,  
 If thou resist.—The Fiend look'd up, and knew  
 His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled  
 Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night. 1015

*The End of the Fourth Book.*

## B O O K V.

Now morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime  
 Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,  
 When Adam wak'd: so custom'd; for his sleep  
 Was aery light, from pure digestion bred,

And



And temperate vapors bland, which th' only sound \*) 5  
 Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,  
 Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song  
 Of birds on every bough. So much the more  
 His wonder was, to find unwaken'd Eve  
 With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek, 10  
 As through unquiet rest: he on his side  
 Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love  
 Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld  
 Beauty, which whether waking or asleep,  
 Shot forth peculiar graces: then, with voice 15  
 Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,  
 Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus: Awake  
 My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,  
 Heav'n's last best gift, my ever new delight!  
 Awake: the morning shines, and the fresh field 20  
 Calls us, we lose the prime, to mark how spring  
 Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,  
 What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,  
 How nature paints her colors, how the bee  
 Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet. 25

Such whispering wak'd her, but with startl'd eye  
 On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.  
 O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,  
 My glory, my perfection! glad I see  
 Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night, 30  
 Such night till this I never pass'd, have dream'd,  
 If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,  
 Works of day past, or morrow's next design,  
 But of offence and trouble, which my mind  
 Knew never till this irksome night. Methought 35  
 Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk  
 With gentle voice, I thought it thine; it said,

G 2

Why

\*) Perhaps these two Verses were originally dictated by the Author thus:

And temperate vapors bland from fuming rills,  
 Which th' only sound of leaves, Aurora's fan,  
 Lightly dispers'd, &c.



Why sleep'st thou Eve? now is the pleasant time,  
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields  
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake  
Tunes sweetest his love-labor'd song; now reigns  
Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasant light  
Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,  
If none regard: heav'n wakes with all his eyes,  
Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire?  
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment  
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.  
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not:  
To find thee I directed then my walk;  
And on, methought, alone I pass'd thro' ways  
That brought me on a sudden to the tree  
Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,  
Much fairer to my fancy than by day:  
And as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood  
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from Heav'n  
By us oft seen: his dewy locks distill'd  
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gaz'd;  
And O fair plant, said he, with fruit furcharg'd,  
Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,  
Nor God, nor Man? Is knowledge so despis'd?  
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?  
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold  
Longer thy offer'd good: why else set here?  
This said he paus'd not, but with vent'rous arm  
He pluck'd, he tasted: me damp horror chill'd  
At such bold words, vouch'd with a deed so bold.  
But he thus, overjoy'd, O fruit divine!  
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt!  
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit  
For Gods, yet able to make Gods of Men:  
And why not Gods of Men, since good the more  
Communicated, more abundant grows,  
The author not impair'd, but honor'd more?  
Here, happy creature, fair Angelic Eve!  
Partake thou also: happy though thou art,



Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be:  
Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods  
Thyself a Goddess, not to earth confin'd,  
But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes  
Ascend to Heav'n, by merit thine, and see 80  
What life the Gods live there, and such live thou.  
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,  
Ev'n to my mouth, of that same fruit held part  
Which he had pluck'd: the pleasant savoury smell  
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought, 85  
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds  
With him I flew, and underneath beheld  
The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide  
And various: wond'ring at my flight and change  
To this high exaltation; suddenly 90  
My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,  
And fell asleep: but O, how glad I wak'd  
To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night  
Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad.

Best image of myself, and dearer half! 95  
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep  
Affects me equally; nor can I like  
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear,  
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,  
Created pure. But know that in the soul 100  
Are many lesser faculties that serve  
Reason as chief: among these fancy next  
Her office holds: of all external things  
Which the five watchful senses represent,  
She forms imaginations, aery shapes, 105  
Which Reason joining or disjoining, frames  
All what we affirm, or what deny, and call  
Our knowledge or opinion; then retires  
Into her private cell, when nature rests.  
Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes 110  
To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,  
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams;  
Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.



Some such resemblances methinks I find  
Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream, 115  
But with addition strange: yet be not sad.  
Evil into the mind of God or Man  
May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave  
No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope  
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream, 120  
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.

Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,  
That wont to be more chearful and serene,  
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world:  
And let us to our fresh employments rise 125  
Among the groves, the fountains and the flow'rs,  
That open now their choicest bosom'd smells  
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.

So chear'd he his fair spouse, and she was chear'd,  
But silently a gentle tear let fall 130  
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair:  
Two other precious drops that ready stood,  
Each in their crystal fluice, he e're they fell  
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse  
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended. 135

So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.  
But first from under shady arborous roof,  
Soon as they forth were come to open sight  
Of day-spring, and the Sun, who scarce uprisen,  
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim, 140  
Shot parallel to th' earth his dewy ray,  
Discovering in wide landscape all the east  
Of Paradise, and Eden's happy plains.

Lowly they bow'd, adoring, and began  
Their orisons, each morning duly paid 145  
In various style; for neither various style  
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise  
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd or sung  
Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence  
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse. 150  
More tuneable, than needed lute or harp

To



To add more sweetness, and they thus began.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!  
Almighty! thine this universal frame,  
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then! 155  
Unspeakable! who sitst above these Heav'ns,  
To us invisible, or dimly seen  
In these thy lowest works: yet these declare  
Thy goodness beyond thought, and pow'r divine.  
Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 160  
Angels! for ye behold him, and with songs  
And choral symphonies, day without night,  
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heav'n,  
On earth join all ye creatures to extol  
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end! 165  
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,  
If better thou belong not to the dawn,  
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn  
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere  
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170  
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,  
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise  
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,  
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.  
Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st, 175  
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;  
And ye five other wand'ring fires, that move  
In mystic dance not without song, resound  
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.  
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth 180  
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run  
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix  
And nourish all things, let your ceaseless change  
Vary to our Great Maker still new praise.  
Ye mists and exhalations that now rise 185  
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,  
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,  
In honor to the world's great author rise;  
Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolor'd sky,



Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 190  
Rising or falling still advance his praise.  
His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,  
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,  
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.  
Fountains and ye, that warble, as ye flow, 195  
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.  
Join voices, all ye living souls, ye birds,  
That singing up to Heaven gate ascend,  
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.  
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200  
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep:  
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,  
To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade  
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.  
Hail universal Lord! be bounteous still 205  
To give us only good: and if the night  
Have gather'd ought of evil or conceal'd,  
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.

So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts  
Firm peace recover'd soon and wonted calm. 210  
On to their morning's rural work they haste  
Among sweet dews and flow'rs; where any row  
Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd to far  
Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check  
Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine 215  
To wed her elm; she spous'd about him twines  
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings  
Her dow'r th' adopted clusters, to adorn  
His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld  
With pity Heav'n's high King, and to him call'd 220  
Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd  
To travel with Tobias, and secur'd  
His marriage with the seventimes wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on earth  
Satan from Hell scap'd thro' the darksome gulf 225  
Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd  
This night the human pair, how he designs

In



In them at once to ruin all mankind.  
Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend  
Converse with Adam, in what bow'r or shade 230  
Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retir'd,  
To respit his day-labor with repast,  
Or with repose: and such discourse bring on,  
As may advise him of his happy state,  
Happiness in his pow'r left free to will, 235  
Left to his own free will; his will though free,  
Yet mutuable: whence warn him to beware  
He swerve not too secure. Tell him withal  
His danger, and from whom; what enemy  
Late fall'n himself from Heav'n, is plotting now 240  
The fall of others from like state of blis:  
By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;  
But by deceit and lies; this let him know,  
Left wilfully transgressing he pretend  
Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd. 245

So spake th' eternal Father, and fulfill'd  
All justice: nor delay'd the winged saint  
After his charge receiv'd; but from among  
Thousand celestial Ardors, where he stood  
Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light, 250  
Flew through the midst of Heav'n: th' angelic quires  
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way  
Through all th' empyreal road; till at the gate  
Of Heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide  
On golden hinges turning, as by work 255  
Divine, the sov'reign architect had fram'd.  
From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,  
Star interpos'd, however small he sees,  
Not unconform to other shining globes,  
Earth, and the gard'n of God, with cedars crown'd 260  
Above all hills. As when by night the glass  
Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes  
Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon:  
Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades,  
Delos, or Samos, first appearing, kens 265



A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight  
He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky  
Sails between worlds and worlds: with steady wing  
Now on the polar winds; then with quick fan  
Winnows the buxom air; till within soar 270  
Of towring eagles, to all the fowls he seems  
A Phoenix gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,  
When to inshrine his reliques in the sun's  
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.  
At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise 275  
He lights, and to his proper shape returns,  
A Seraph wing'd: six wings he wore, to shade  
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad  
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast  
With regal ornament: the middle pair 280  
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round  
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold  
And colors dipt in heav'n: the third his feet  
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,  
Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood, 285  
And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd  
The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands  
Of Angels under watch; and to his state,  
And to his message high in honor rise;  
For on some message high they guess'd him bound. 290  
Their glitt'ring tents he pass'd, and now is come  
Into the blisfull field, through groves of myrrh,  
And flow'ring odors, cassia, nard, and balm;  
A wilderness of sweets! for Nature here  
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will 295  
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,  
Wild above rule or art; enormous blifs!  
Him through the spicy forest onward come  
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat  
Of his cool bow'r, while now the mounted Sun 300  
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm  
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:  
And Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd  
For



For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please  
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst 305  
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,  
Berry or grape; to whom thus Adam call'd.

Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold  
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape  
Comes this way moving; seems another morn 310  
Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from Heav'n  
To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe  
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,  
And what thy stores contain, bring forth and pour  
Abundance, fit to honor and receive 315  
Our heav'nly stranger: well we may afford  
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow  
From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies  
Her fertil growth, and by disburd'ning grows  
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare. 320

To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,  
Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,  
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;  
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains  
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes. 325  
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,  
Each plant, and juciest gourd, will pluck such choice  
To entertain our Angel-guest, as he  
Beholding shall confess, that here on Earth  
God hath dispens'd his bounties, as in Heav'n. 330

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste,  
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent  
What choice to chuse for delicacy best,  
What order, so contriv'd as not to mix  
Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring 335  
Taste after taste upheld with kindest change:  
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk  
Whatever earth all-bearing mother yields  
In India East or West, or middle shore  
In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where 340  
Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat

Rough,



Rough or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell,  
She gathers; tribute large and on the board  
Heaps with unsparing hand: for drink the grape  
She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths 345  
From many a berry; and from sweet kernels press'd,  
She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold  
Wants her fit vessels pure: then strows the ground  
With rose, and odors from the shrub unfum'd.

Mean while our primitive great fire, to meet 350  
His god-like guest, walks forth, without more train  
Accompanied than with his own complete  
Perfections; in himself was all his state:  
More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits  
On Princes, when their rich retinue long 355  
Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold  
Dazles the crowd, and sets them all agape.  
Nearer his presence Adam though not aw'd,  
Yet with submissive approach, and reverence meek,  
As to a superior nature, bowing low, 360  
Thus said. Native of Heaven! for other place  
None can than Heaven such glorious shape contain,  
Since by descending from the thrones above,  
Those happy places thou hast deign'd a while  
To want, and honor these, vouchsafe with us 365  
Two only, who yet by sov'reign gift possess  
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower  
To rest; and what the garden choicest bears  
To sit and taste, till this meridian heat  
Be over, and the Sun more cool decline. 370

Whom thus th' angelic Virtue answer'd mild.  
Adam, I therefore came, nor art thou such  
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,  
As may not oft invite, though spirits of Heav'n,  
To visit thee: lead on then where thy bow'r 375  
O'er shades; for these mid-hours, till ev'ning rise,  
I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge  
They came, that like Pomona's arbor smil'd,  
With flowrets deck'd, and fragrant smells: but Eve  
Und-



Undeck'd, save with herself, more lovely fair 380  
Than Wood-Nymph, or the fairest Goddess feign'd  
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,  
Stood t'entertain her guest from Heav'n: no veil  
She needed, virtue-proof, no thought infirm  
Alter'd her cheek. On whom the Angel *Hail* 385  
Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd  
Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.

Hail Mother of Mankind! whose fruitful womb  
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,  
Than with these various fruits the trees of God 390  
Have heap'd this table. Rais'd of grassy turf  
Their table was, and mossy seats had round:  
And on her ample square from side to side  
All Autumn pil'd, though Spring and Autumn here  
Danc'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;  
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began  
Our author. Heav'nly stranger! please to taste  
These bounties which our nourisher, from whom  
All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends,  
To us for food and for delight hath caus'd 400  
The earth to yield: unfavoury food perhaps  
To spiritual natures; only this I know,  
That one celestial Father gives to all.

To whom the Angel. Therefore what he gives,  
Whose praise be ever sung! to man, in part 405  
Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found  
No ingrateful food, and food alike those pure  
Intelligential substances require,  
As doth your rational: and both contain  
Within them every lower faculty 410  
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,  
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,  
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.  
For know, whatever was created, needs  
To be sustain'd and fed: of elements 415  
The grosser feeds the purer; earth the sea;  
Earth and the sea feed air; the air those fires

Ethe-



Ethereal; and as lowest first the moon;  
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd  
Vapors, not yet into her substance turn'd. 420  
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale  
From her moist continent to higher orbs.  
The Sun, that light imparts to all, receives  
From all his alimental recompense,  
In humid exhalations; and at ev'n 425  
Supps with the ocean. Though in Heav'n the trees  
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines  
Yield Nectar; though from of the boughs each morn  
We brush mellifluous dewes, and find the ground  
Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here 430  
Varied his bounty so with new delights,  
As may compare with Heaven, and to taste  
Think not I shall be nice.——So down they sat,  
And to their viands fell, nor seemingly  
The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss 435  
Of Theologians, but with keen dispatch  
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat  
To transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires  
Through spirits with ease, nor wonder; if by fire  
Of sooty coal the empiric alchymist 440  
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,  
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,  
As from the mine. Mean while at table Eve  
Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups  
With pleasant liquors crown'd. O innocence 445  
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,  
Then had the sons of God excuse t' have been  
Enamour'd at that sight: but in those hearts  
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy  
Was understood, the injur'd lover's Hell. 450

Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,  
Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose  
In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass  
Giv'n him by this great conference, to know  
Of things above this world, and of their being 455  
Who



Who dwell in Heav'n: whose excellence he saw  
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,  
Divine effulgence! whose high pow'r so far  
Exceeded human; and his wary speech  
Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd. 460

Inhabitant with God! now know I well  
Thy favor, in this honor done to man;  
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd  
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,  
Food noot of Angels, yet accepted so, 465  
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem  
At Heav'n's high feasts t' have fed: yet what compare?

To whom the winged Hierarch reply'd.  
O Adam! one Almighty is, from whom  
All things proceed, and up to him return 470  
If not deprav'd from good, created all  
Such to perfection, one first matter all,  
Indued with various forms, various degrees  
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;  
But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure, 475  
As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending,  
Each in their several active spheres assign'd;  
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds  
Proportion'd to each kind. So, from the root  
Springs lighter the green stalk; from thence the leaves  
More aery; last, the bright consummate flow'r  
Spirits odorous breathes; flow'rs, and their fruit,  
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,  
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,  
To intellectual; give both life and sense, 485  
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul  
Reason receives; and reason is her being,  
Discursive, or intuitive; discourse  
Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours;  
Differing but in degree, of kind the same. 490  
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good  
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,  
To proper substance. Time may come, when Men  
With



With Angels may participate, and find  
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare: 495  
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps  
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,  
 Improv'd by tract of time; and wing'd ascend  
 Ethereal, as we; or may at choice,  
 Here, or in heav'nly Paradises dwell; 500  
 If ye be found obedient, and retain  
 Unalterably firm his love entire,  
 Whose progeny you are. Mean while, enjoy  
 Your fill what happiness this happy state  
 Can comprehend, incapable of more. 505

To whom the patriarch of mankind reply'd.  
 O favourable spirit, propitious guest!  
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct  
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set  
 From center to circumference; whereon 510  
 In contemplation of created things,  
 By steps we may ascent to God. But say,  
 What meant that caution join'd, if ye be found  
 Obedient? Can we want obedience then  
 To him, or possibly his love desert, 515  
 Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here,  
 Full to the utmost measure of what bliss  
 Human desires can seek, or apprehend?

To whom the Angel. Son of heav'n and earth,  
 Attend: That thou art happy, owe to God: 520  
 That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,  
 That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.  
 This was that caution giv'n thee; he advis'd.  
 God made thee perfect, not immutable;  
 And good he made thee; but to persevere 525  
 He left it in thy pow'r, ordain'd thy will  
 By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate  
 Inextricable, or strict necessity.  
 Our voluntary service he requires,  
 Not our necessitated; such with him 530  
 Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how  
 Can



Can hearts, not free, be try'd whether they serve  
Willing or no, who will but what they must  
By destiny, and can no other chuse?  
Myself and all th' Angelic host, that stand 535  
In sight of God inthron'd, our happy state  
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;  
On other surety none: freely we serve,  
Because we freely love; as in our will  
To love, or not; in this we stand or fall. 540  
And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,  
And so from Heaven to deepest Hell; O fall  
From what high state of blifs, into what woe!

To whom our great progenitor. Thy words  
Attentive, and with more delighted ear, 545  
Divine instructor! I have heard, than when  
Cherubic songs by night from neighb'ring hills  
Aereal music send. Nor knew I not  
To be both will and deed created free;  
Yet that we never shall forget to love 550  
Our Maker, and obey him whose command  
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts  
Assur'd me, and still assure; though what thou tell'st  
Hath pass'd in Heav'n, some doubt within me move,  
But more desire to hear, if thou consent, 555  
The full relation; which must needs be strange,  
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard:  
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun  
Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins  
His other half in the great zone of Heav'n. 560

Thus Adam made request, and Raphael  
After short pause assenting, thus began.

High matter thou injoin'st me, O prime of men!  
Sad task and hard! For how shall I relate  
To human sense th' invisible exploits 565  
Of warring spirits? How, without remorse,  
The ruin of so many glorious once,  
And perfect, while they stood? how last unfold  
The secrets of another world, perhaps

H

Not



Not lawful to reveal! Yet for thy good 570  
 This is dispens'd: and what surmounts the reach  
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,  
 By lik'ning spiritual to corporeal forms,  
 As may express them best: though, what if earth  
 Be but the shadow of heav'n, and things therein 575  
 Each to' other like, more than on earth is thought?  
 As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild  
 Reign'd where these Heav'n's now roll, where earth now  
 Upon her centre pois'd; when on a day, [rests  
 For time, though in eternity, apply'd 580  
 To motion, measures all things durable  
 By present, past, and future, on such day  
 As Heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host  
 Of Angels by imperial summons call'd,  
 Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne 585  
 Forthwith, from all the ends of Heav'n, appear'd  
 Under their Hierarchs in orders bright:  
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,  
 Standarts, and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear,  
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590  
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees:  
 Or in their glittering tissues bear imblaz'd  
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love  
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs  
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood, 595  
 Orb within orb, the Father Infinite,  
 By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,  
 Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top  
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.

Hear all ye Angels, progeny of light, 600  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs!  
 Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.  
 This day I have begot whom I declare  
 My only Son, and on this holy hill  
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold 605  
 At my right hand; your Head I him appoint:  
 And by myself have sworn to him shall bow

All



All knees in Heav'n, and shall confess him Lord.  
Under his great vice-gerent reign abide  
United, as one individual soul, 610  
For ever happy: Him who disobey's,  
Me disobey's, breaks union, and that day,  
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls  
Into utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place  
Ordain'd without redemption, without end. 615  
So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words  
All seem'd well pleas'd: all seem'd, but were not all.  
That day, as other solemn days, they spent  
In song and dance about the sacred hill;  
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere 620  
Of Planets and of fix'd in all her wheels  
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,  
Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular  
Then most, when most irregular they seem;  
And in their motions harmony divine 625  
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear  
Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd,  
For we have also our ev'ning and our morn,  
We ours for change delectable, not need,  
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn 630  
Desirous: all in circles as they stood,  
Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd  
With Angels food, and rubied nectar flows  
In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,  
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven. 635  
On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh flow'rets crown'd,  
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet  
Quaff immortality and joy, secure  
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds  
Excess, before th' all-bounteous King, who showr'd 640  
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.  
Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhal'd  
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade  
Spring both, the face of brightest Heav'n had chang'd  
To grateful twilight, for night comes not there 645



In darker veil, and roseate dew's dispos'd  
 All but th' unsleeping eyes of God to rest;  
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far  
 Than all this globose earth in plain outspread,  
 Such are the courts of God! th' Angelic throng 650  
 Dispers'd in bands and files, their camp extend  
 By living streams among the trees of life,  
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd,  
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept  
 Fann'd with cool winds; save those who in their course  
 Melodious hymns, about the sov'reign throne,  
 Alternate all night long. But not so wak'd  
 Satan, so call him now, his former name  
 Is heard no more in Heaven. He of the first,  
 If not the first Arch-Angel, great in pow'r, 660  
 In favor and preeminence, yet fraught  
 With envy against the Son of God, that day  
 Honor'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd  
 Messiah, King anointed, could not bear  
 Thro' pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd. 665  
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,  
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour,  
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd  
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave  
 Unworshipt, unbey'd the throne supreme 670  
 Contemptuous, and his next subordinate  
 Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake.

Sleep'st thou, companion dear! what sleep can close  
 Thy eye-lids? and remember'st what decree  
 Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips 675  
 Of Heaven's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts  
 Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont t' impart:  
 Both waking we were one; how then can now  
 Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest impos'd:  
 New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise  
 In us who serve; new counsels, to debate  
 What doubtful may ensue: more in this place  
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou

Of

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Of all those myriads which we lead the chief:  
Tell them that by command, e'er yet dim night 685  
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,  
And all who under me their banners wave,  
Homeward, with flying march, where we possess  
The quarters of the north; there to prepare  
Fit entertainment to receive our King, 690  
The greath Messiah, and his new commands;  
Who speedily through all Hierarchies  
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infus'd  
Bad influence into th' unwary breast 695  
Of his associate: he together calls,  
Or several one by one, the regent Pow'rs,  
Under him regent, tells, as he was taught,  
That the Most High commanding, now ere night,  
Now ere dim night had disincumber'd heav'n, 700  
The great hierarchal standard was to move:  
'Tells the suggested cause, and casts between  
Ambiguous words, and jealousies, to found  
Or taint integrity: but all obey'd  
The wonted signal, and superior voice 705  
Of their great Potentate; for great indeed  
His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n,  
His count'nance, as the morning star that guides  
The starry flock allur'd them; and with lies  
Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's host. 710

Mean-while th' Eternal eye, whose sights discerns  
Abstrused thoughts, from forth his holy mount,  
And from within the golden lamps that burn  
Nightly before him, saw without their light  
Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spread 715  
Among the Sons of Morn, what multitudes  
Were banded to oppose his high decree;  
And smiling to his only Son thus said.

Son, thou in whom my glory I behold  
In full resplendence, Heir of all my might! 720  
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure



Of our Omnipotence; and with what arms  
We mean to hold what anciently we claim  
Of Deity or empire: such a foe  
Is rising, who intends t' erect his throne 725  
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north:  
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try  
In battel, what our pow'r is, or our right.  
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw  
With speed what force is left, and all employ 730  
In our defense, lest unawares we lose  
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.

To whom the Son with calm aspect, and clear,  
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene!  
Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes 735  
Justly hast in derision, and secure  
Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,  
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate  
Illustrates, when they see all regal pow'r  
Giv'n me to quell their pride; and in event 740  
Know whether I be dextrous to subdue  
Thy Rebels, or be found the worst in Heav'n.

So spake the Son: but Satan with his powers  
Far was advanc'd on winged speed; an host  
Innumerable as the stars of night, 745  
Or, stars of morning, dew-drops, which the Sun  
Impearls on every leaf and every flow'r.  
Regions they pass'd, and mighty regencies  
Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and Thrones,  
In their triple degrees; Regions to which 750  
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more  
Than what this garden is to all the earth,  
And all the sea; from one entire globe  
Stretch'd into longitude, which having pass'd,  
At length into the limits of the north 755  
They came, and Satan to his royal seat  
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount  
Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers  
From diamond quarries hew'n, and rocks of gold,

The



*The Palace of great Lucifer*; so call 760  
That structure in the dialect of men  
Interpreted, which not long after he,  
Affecting all equality with God,  
In imitation of that mount whereon  
Messiah was declar'd in sight of Heav'n, 765  
*The Mountain of the Congregation* call'd,  
For thither he assembled all his train,  
Pretending so commanded, to consult  
About the great reception of their King,  
Thither to come, and with calumnious art 770  
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.  
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs!  
If these magnific titles yet remain  
Not merely titular! since by decree  
Another now hath to himself ingross'd 775  
All pow'r, and us eclips'd under the name  
Of King anointed; for whom all this haste  
Of midnight-march, and hurry'd meeting here,  
This only to consult, how we may best  
With what may be devis'd of honors new 780  
Receive him, coming to receive from us  
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,  
Too much to one, but double how indur'd,  
To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?  
But what if better counsels might erect 785  
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?  
Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend  
The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust  
To know ye right; or if ye know yourselves  
Natives and sons of Heav'n, possess'd before 790  
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,  
Equally free: for orders and degrees  
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.  
Who can in reason then, or right, assume  
Monarchy over such as live by right 795  
His equals, if in pow'r and splendor less,  
In freedom equal? or can introduce



Law and edict on us, who without law  
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,  
And look for adoration, to th' abuse  
Of those Imperial Titles which assert  
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve? 800

Thus far his bold discourse without controul  
Had audience; when among the Seraphim,  
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd 805  
The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,  
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe,  
The current of his fury thus oppos'd.

O argument blasphemous, false and proud!  
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heav'n 810  
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate!  
In place thyself so high above thy peers.  
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn  
The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,  
That to his only Son, by right indued 815  
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heav'n  
Shall bend the knee, and in that honor due  
Confess him rightful King? Unjust, thou say'st,  
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,  
And equal over equals to let reign, 820  
One over all with unsucceeded pow'r.—  
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute  
With him the points of liberty, who made  
Thee what thou art? and form'd the Pow'rs of Heav'n  
Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being? 825  
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good  
And of our good, and of our dignity  
How provident he is; how far from thought  
To make us less; bent rather to exalt  
Our happy state, under one Head more near 830  
United. But to grant it thee unjust,  
That equal over equals monarch reign:  
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,  
Or all Angelic nature join'd in one,  
Equal to him begotten Son? By whom, 835

As



As by his Word, the mighty Father made  
All things, ev'n thee, and all the spirits of Heav'n,  
By him created in their bright degrees;  
Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd  
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs,  
Essential Pow'rs! nor by his reign obscur'd,  
But more illustrious made, since he the Head  
One of our number thus reduc'd becomes;  
His laws our laws, all honor to him done  
Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage, 845  
And tempt not these; but hasten to appease  
Th' incens'd Father, and th' incens'd Son,  
While pardon may be found, in time besought.

So spake the fervent Angel: but his zeal  
None seconded, as out of season judg'd, 850  
Or singular and rash: whereat rejoic'd  
Th' apostate, and more haughty thus reply'd.

That we were form'd then, say'st thou? and the work  
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd  
From Father to his Son? Strange point and new! 855  
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd: who saw  
When this creation was? Remember'st thou  
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?  
We know no time when we were not as now!  
Know none before us; self-begot, self-raised 860  
By our own quick'ning pow'r, when fatal course  
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature  
Of this our native Heav'n, ethereal sons.

Our puissance is our own, our own right hand  
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try 865  
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold  
Whether by supplication we intend  
Address, and to begirt th' Almighty throne  
Beseeching or besieging. This report,  
These tidings carry to th' anointed King; 870  
And fly, e're evil intercept thy flight?

He said, and, as the found of waters deep,  
Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause,



Through the infinite host: nor less for that  
 The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone 875  
 Incompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold.

O alienate from God, O spirit accurs'd,  
 Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall  
 Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd  
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 880  
 Both of thy crime and punishment. Henceforth  
 No more be troubled how to quit the yoke  
 Of God's Messiah: those indulgent laws  
 Will not be now vouchsaf'd; other decrees  
 Against thee are gone forth without recall. 885  
 That golden scepter which thou didst reject,  
 Is now an iron rod, to bruise and break  
 Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;  
 Yet not for thy advice, or threats I fly  
 These wicked tents devoted; lest the wrath 890  
 Impendent, raging into sudden flame  
 Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel  
 His thunder on thy head, devouring fire!  
 Then who created thee lamenting learn,  
 When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know. 895  
 So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found  
 Among the faithless, faithful only he:  
 Among innumerable false, unmov'd,  
 Unshaken, unseduc'd, untterrify'd,  
 His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal; 900  
 Nor number, nor example with him wrought  
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind  
 Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,  
 Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd  
 Superior, nor of violence fear'd ought: 905  
 And, with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd  
 On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd.

*The End of the Fifth Book.*



## B O O K VI.

All night the dreadless Angel unpursu'd,  
Thro' Heav'n's wide champain held his way, till morn,  
Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand  
Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave  
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,  
Where light and darkness in perpetual round  
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes thro' Heav'n  
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night:  
Light issues forth, and at the other door  
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour  
To veil the Heav'n, tho' darkness there might well  
Seem twilight here: and now went forth the morn,  
Such as in highest Heav'n, array'd in gold  
Empyrean; from before her vanish'd night,  
Shot thro' with orient beams: when all the plain  
Cover'd with thick imbattel'd squadrons bright,  
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,  
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view.  
War he perceiv'd, war in procinct, and found  
Already known what he for news had thought  
To have reported: gladly then he mix'd  
Among those friendly Pow'rs, who him receiv'd  
With joy and acclamations loud, that One,  
That of so many myriads fall'n, yet One  
Return'd, not lost. On to the sacred hill  
They led him high applauded, and present  
Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,  
From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard.  
Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought  
The better fight, who single hast maintain'd  
Against revolted multitudes the cause  
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms:  
And for the testimony of truth hast borne  
Universal reproach; far worse to bear  
Than violence: for this was all thy care,



To stand approv'd in fight of God, tho' worlds  
Judg'd thee perverse. The easier conquest now  
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,  
Back on thy foes more glorious to return,  
Than scorn'd thou didst depart; and to subdue 40  
By force, who reason for their law refuse,  
Right reason for their law, and for their king  
Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.

Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,  
And thou in military prowess next 45  
Gabriel, lead forth to battel these my sons  
Invincible; lead forth my armed Saints,  
By thousands and by millions rang'd for fight;  
Equal in number to that godless crew,  
Rebellious: them with fire and hostile arms 50  
Fearless assault; and to the brow of Heav'n  
Persuing, drive them out from God and bliss,  
Into their place of punishment, the gulf  
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide  
His fiery Chaos to receive their fall. 55

So spake the Sovereign Voice, and clouds began  
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll  
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign  
Of wrath awak'd. Nor with less dread the loud  
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow: 60  
At which command, the Powers militant  
That stood for Heav'n, in mighty quadrat join'd  
Of union irresistible, mov'd on  
In silence their bright legions, to the sound  
Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd 65  
Heroic ardor to advent'rous deeds,  
Under their God-like leaders, in the cause  
Of God and his Messiah. On they move  
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,  
Nor strait'ning vale, nor wood, nor stream divides 70  
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground  
Their march was, and the passive air upbore  
Their nimble tread: as when the total kind  
Of



Of birds, in orderly array on wing,  
Came summon'd over Eden, to receive 75  
Their names of thee: so, over many a tract  
Of Heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide,  
Tenfold the length of his terrene. At last,  
Far in th' horizon to the north appear'd,  
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd 80  
In battailous aspect, and nearer view  
Bristled with upright beams innumerable  
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields  
Various, with boastful argument portray'd,  
The banded Pow'rs of Satan, hasting on 85  
With furious expedition: for they ween'd  
That self-same day by fight, or by surprize  
To win the mount of God; and on his throne  
To set the envier of his state, the proud  
Aspirer; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain 90  
In the mid-way. Though strange to us it seem'd  
At first, that Angel should with Angel war,  
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet  
So oft in festivals of joy and love  
Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire, 95  
Hymning th' eternal Father: but the shout  
Of battel now began, and rushing sound  
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.  
High in the midst exalted as a God,  
Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100  
Idol of majesty divine! inclos'd  
With flaming Cherubim, and golden shields:  
Then, lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now  
'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,  
A dreadful interval! and front to front 105  
Presented stood in terrible array,  
Of hideous length, before the cloudy van,  
On the rough edge of battel e're it join'd,  
Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,  
Came towring, arm'd in adamant and gold: 110  
Abdiel that fight indur'd not, where he stood  
Among



Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds;  
And thus his own undaunted heart explores.

O Heav'n! that such resemblance of the Highest  
Should yet remain, where faith and realty  
Remain not: wherefore should not strength and might  
There fail where virtue fails; or weakest prove  
Where boldest, though to fight unconquerable?  
His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aid,  
I mean to try; whose reason I have try'd  
Unsound and false: nor is it ought but just,  
That he who in debate of truth hath won  
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike  
Victor: though brutish that contest and foul,  
When reason hath to deal with force; yet so  
Most reason is that reason overcome.

So pondering, and from his armed peers  
Forth-stepping opposit, half way he met  
His daring foe, at this prevention more  
Incens'd, and thus securely him defy'd.

Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd  
The height of thy aspiring unoppos'd,  
The throne of God unguarded, and his side  
Abandon'd at the terror of thy pow'r,  
Or potent tongue: fool! not to think how vain  
Against th' Omnipotent to rise in arms:  
Who, out of smallest things, could without end  
Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat  
Thy folly; or with solitary hand,  
Reaching beyond all limit at one blow,  
Unaided could have finish'd thee, and whelm'd  
Thy legions under darkness: but thou seest  
All are not of thy train; there be wo faith  
Prefer, and piety to God, though then  
To thee not visible, when I alone  
Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent  
From all: my sect thou seest; now learn too late  
How few sometimes may know, when thousand err.

Whom the grand foe with scornful eye alkance

Thus



Thus answer'd. Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour 150  
For my revenge, first fought for thou return'st  
From flight, seditious Angel! to receive  
Thy merited reward, the first assay  
Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue  
Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose 155  
A third part of the Gods, in synod met  
Their deities to assert, who while they feel  
Vigor divine within them, can allow  
Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st  
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win 160  
From me some plume, that thy success may show  
Destruction to the rest; this pause between,  
Unanswer'd lest thou boast, to let thee know,  
At first I thought that liberty and Heav'n,  
To heav'nly souls had been all one; but now 165  
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,  
Ministring spirits, train'd up in feast and song,  
Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of Heav'n,  
Servility with freedom to contend,  
As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove. 170

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern reply'd.  
Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find  
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:  
Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name  
Of *Servitude*, to serve whom God ordains, 175  
Or Nature: God and Nature bid the same,  
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels  
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,  
To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd  
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180  
Thyself not free, but to thyself inthrall'd;  
Yet lewdly dar'st our ministring upbraid.  
Reign thou in Hell thy kingdom, let me serve  
In Heav'n God ever blest, and his divine  
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd! 185  
Yet chains in Hell, not realms expect: mean while  
From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight

This



This greeting on thy impious crest receive.

So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,  
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell 190

On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,

Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield

Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge

He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee,

His massy spear upstay'd: as if on earth 195

Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,

Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,

Half-sunk with all his Pines. Amazement seis'd

The rebel thrones, but greater rage, to see

Thus foil'd their mightiest: ours joy fill'd, and shout,

Prefage of victory and fierce desire

Of battel: whereat Michaël bid sound

Th' Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vast of Heav'n

It sounded, and the faithful armies rung

Hosannah to the Highest: nor stood at gaze 205

The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd

The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,

And clamor, such as heard in Heav'n till now

Was never; arms on armor clashing bray'd

Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210

Of brazen chariots rag'd: dire was the noise

Of conflict! over head the dismal hiss

Of fiery darts in flaming vollies flew;

And flying, vaulted either host with fire,

So under fiery cope together rush'd 215

Both battels main, with ruinous assault

And inextinguishable rage: all Heav'n

Resounded; and had Earth been then, all Earth

Had to her centre shook. What wonder? when

Millions of fierce encountring Angels fought 220

On either side, the least of whom could wield

These elements, and arm him with the force

Of all their regions: how much more of pow'r

Army against army, numberless, to raise

Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb, 225

Though



Though not destroy, their happy native seat;  
Had not th' eternal King omnipotent,  
From his strong hold of Heav'n, high over-rul'd  
And limited their might: though number'd such,  
As each divided legion might have seem'd 230  
A numerous host; in strenght each armed hand  
A legion, led in fight yet leader seem'd  
Each warrior single as in chief, expert  
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway  
Of battle, open when, and when to close 235  
The ridges of grim war: no thought of flight,  
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed  
That argued fear: each on himself rely'd,  
As only in his arm the moment lay  
Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame 240  
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread  
That war, and various: sometimes on firm ground  
A standing fight; then soaring on main wing  
Tormented all the air; all air seemed then  
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale 245  
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day  
Prodigious pow'r had shown, and met in arms  
No equal, ranging through the dire attack  
Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length  
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd 250  
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway  
Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down  
Wide-wasting; such destruction to withstand  
He hasted, and oppos'd the rocky orb  
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield, 255  
A vast circumference: At his approach  
The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toil  
Surceas'd, and glad, as hoping here to end  
Intestine war in Heav'n, th' arch-foe subdu'd,  
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown 260  
And visage all inflam'd, first thus began.

Author of evil! unknown till thy revolt,  
Unnam'd in Heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest



These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,  
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself 265  
And thy adherents: how hast thou disturb'd  
Heav'n's blessed peace, and into nature brought  
Misery, uncreated till the crime  
Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instill'd  
Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270  
And faithful, now prov'd false! But think not here  
To trouble holy rest; Heav'n casts thee out  
From all her confines. Heav'n, the seat of bliss,  
Brooks not the works of violence and war.  
Hence then, and Evil go with thee along, 275  
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,  
Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,  
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,  
Or some more sudden vengeance, wing'd from God,  
Precipitate thee with augmented pain. 280

So spake the Prince of Angels: to whom thus  
The Adversary. Nor think thou with wind  
Of aery threats to awe, whom yet with deeds  
Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these  
To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise 285  
Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me,  
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats  
To chase me hence? Err not that so shall end  
The strife which thou call'st evil, but we stile  
The strife of glory; which we mean to win 290  
Or turn this Heav'n itself into the Hell  
Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,  
If not to reign: mean while thy utmost force,  
And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,  
I fly not; but have fought thee far and nigh. 295

Thy ended parle, and both address'd for fight  
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue  
Of Angels, can relate, or to what things  
Likely on earth conspicuous, that may lift  
Human imagination to such height 300  
Of Godlike pow'r? For likest Gods they seem'd,

Stood



Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms,  
Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.  
Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air  
Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields 305  
Blaz'd opposit, while expectation stood  
In horror: from each hand with speed retir'd,  
Where erst was thickest fight, th' angelic throng,  
And left large field, unsafe within the wind  
Of such commotion: such as, to set forth 310  
Great things by small, if Nature's concord broke,  
Among the constellations war were sprung,  
Two planets rushing from aspect malign  
Of fiercest opposition in mid-sky  
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound. 315  
Together both, with next t' almighty arm  
Up-lifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd  
That might determine, and not need repeat,  
As not of pow'r at once; nor odds appear'd  
In might or swift prevention: but the sword 320  
Of Michael from the armory of God  
Was giv'n him temper'd so, that neither keen  
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met  
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite  
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stay'd, 325  
But with swift wheel reverse, deep entring shar'd  
All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,  
And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; so sore  
The griding sword with discontinuous wound  
Pass'd thro' him: but th' ethereal substance clos'd, 330  
Not long divisible; and from the gash  
A stream of nectarous humor issuing flow'd  
Sanguin, such as celestial spirits may bleed,  
And all his armor stain'd, e're while so bright.  
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run 335  
By Angels many and strong, who interpos'd  
Defense; while others bore him on their shields  
Back to his chariot; where it stood retir'd  
From off the files of war: there they him laid



Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame, 340  
To find himself not matchless, and his pride  
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath  
His confidence to equal God in pow'r.

Yet soon he heal'd; for spirits that live throughout  
Vital in every part, not as frail man 345  
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,  
Cannot but by annihilating die:

Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound  
Receive, no more than can the fluid air!  
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350  
All intellect, all sense; and as they please,  
They limb themselves, and color, shape or size  
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

Mean while in other parts like deeds deserv'd  
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought, 355  
And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array  
Of Moloch furious king! who him defy'd,  
And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound  
Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of Heav'n  
Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon 360

Down cloven to the waste, with shatter'd arms  
And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing  
Uriel and Raphaël, his vaunting foe,  
Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,  
Vanquish'd Adramelech, and Asmadai, 365  
Two potent thrones! that to be less than Gods  
Disdain'd: but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,  
Mangl'd with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.  
Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy  
The atheist crew, but with redoubl'd blow 370  
Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence  
Of Ramiel scorch'd and blasted overthrew.—

I might relate of thousands, and their names  
Eternize here on earth; but those elect  
Angels, contented with their fame in Heav'n, 375  
Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,  
In might though wondrous, and in acts of war,  
Nor



Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom  
Cancel'd from Heav'n and sacred memory,  
Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell. 380  
For strength from truth divided, and from just,  
Haudable, nought merits but dispraise  
And ignominy; yet to glory aspires  
Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:  
Therefore eternal silence be their doom! 385

And now, their mightiest quell'd, the battel swerv'd,  
With many an inrode gor'd; deformed rout  
Enter'd, and foul disorder: all the ground  
With shiver'd armor strown, and on a heap  
Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd, 390  
And fiery foaming steeds: what stood, recoil'd  
O'er-wearied, thro' the faint Satanic host  
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpriz'd,  
Then first with fear surpriz'd and sense of pain,  
Fled ignominious: to such evil brought 395  
By sin of disobedience, till that hour  
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.  
Far otherwise th' inviolable Saints,  
In cubic phalanx firm, advanc'd entire,  
Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd: 400  
Such high advantages their innocence  
Gave them above their foes, not to have sinn'd,  
Not to have disobey'd! in fight they stood  
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd  
By wound, tho' from their place by violence mov'd.

Now night her course began, and over Heav'n  
Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,  
And silence on the odious din of war:  
Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,  
Victor and vanquish'd. On the foughten field 410  
Michael and his Angels prevalent  
Encamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,  
Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part,  
Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,  
Far in the dark dislodg'd, and void of rest, 415



His Potentates to council call'd by night;  
And in the midst thus undismay'd began.

O now in danger try'd, now known in arms  
Not to be overpower'd, Companions dear!  
Found worthy not of liberty alone, 420  
Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,  
Honor, dominion, glory, and renown;  
Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight,  
And if one day, why not eternal days?  
What Heaven's Lord hath powerfulest to send 425  
Against us from about his throne, and judg'd  
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,  
But proves not so!——then fallible, it seems,  
Of future we may deem him, though till now  
Omniscient thought. True 't is, less firmly arm'd, 430  
Some disadvantage we indur'd, and pain,  
Till now not known, but known as soon contemn'd;  
Since now we find this our empyreal form  
Incapable of mortal injury,  
Imperishable; and though pierc'd with wound, 435  
Soon closing, and by native vigor heal'd.  
Of evil then so small as easy think  
The remedy: perhaps more valid arms,  
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,  
May serve to better us, and worse our foes, 440  
Or equal what between us made the odds,  
In nature none: if other hidden cause  
Left them superior, while we can preserve  
Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,  
Due search and consultation will disclose. 445

He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood  
Nisroch, of Principalities the prime;  
As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,  
Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havoc hewn,  
And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake. 450

Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free  
Enjoyment of our right as Gods! yet hard  
For Gods, and too unequal work we find,

Against



Against unequal arms to fight in pain,  
Against unpain'd, impassive; from which evil 455  
Ruin must needs ensue: for what avails  
Valor or strength, tho' matchless, quell'd with pain  
Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands  
Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well  
Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 460  
But live content, which is the calmest life:  
But pain is perfect misery, the worst  
Of evils, and excessive, overturns  
All patience. He who therefore can invent  
With what more forcible we may offend 465  
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm  
Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves  
No less than for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto with look compos'd Satan reply'd.  
Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470  
Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.  
Which of us who beholds the bright surface  
Of this ethereous mould, whereon we stand,  
This continent of spacious Heav'n, adorn'd  
With plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems, and gold;  
Whose eye so superficially surveys  
These things, as not to mind from whence they grow  
Deep under ground; materials dark and crude,  
Of spirituous and fiery spume, till touch'd  
With heavens ray, and temper'd they shoot forth 480  
So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?  
These, in their dark nativity, the deep  
Shall yield us pregnant with infernal flame:  
Which into hollow engins, long and round,  
Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire 485  
Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth  
From far, with thund'ring noise, among our foes  
Such implements of mischief, as shall dash  
To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands  
Adverse: that they shall fear we have disarm'd 490  
The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.



Nor long shall be our labor; yet ere dawn,  
Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive,  
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd  
Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd. 495

He ended, and his words their drooping chear  
Inlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.  
Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how he  
To be th' inventor mis'd, so easy it seem'd  
Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought  
Impossible. Yet haply of thy race  
In future days, if malice should abound,  
Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd  
With dev'lish machination, might devise  
Like instrument, to plague the sons of men 505  
For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.  
Forthwith from council to the work they flew,  
None arguing stood: innumerable hands  
Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd  
Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510  
Th' originals of nature in their crude  
Conception: sulphurous and nitrous foam  
They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,  
Concocted and adusted they reduc'd  
To blackest grain, and into store convey'd. 515  
Part, hidden veins digg'd up, nor hath this earth  
Entrails unlike, of mineral and stone,  
Whereof to found their engines and their balls  
Of missive ruin: part, incentive reed  
Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520  
So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,  
Secret they finish'd, and in order set,  
With silent circumspection unespied.

Now when fair morn orient in Heav'n appear'd,  
Up rose the victor Angels, and to arms 525  
The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood  
Of golden panoply, refulgent host!  
Soon banded: others from the dawning hills  
Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,  
Each



Each quarter, to descry the distant foe,  
Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,  
In motion or in halt: him soon they met  
Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in flow  
But firm battalion: back with speediest sail  
Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing,  
Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cry'd.

Arm, warriors, arm for fight! the foe at hand,  
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit  
This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud  
He comes, and settled in his face I see  
Sad resolution, and secure. Let each  
His adamantinè coad gird well, and each  
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbèd shield,  
Born ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,  
If I conjecture ought, no drizzling show'r,  
But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.

So warn'd he them, aware themselves; and soon  
In order, quit of all impediment,  
Instant without disturb they took alarm,  
And onward mov'd embattel'd: when behold!  
Not distant far with heavy pace the foe  
Approaching gross and huge; in hollow cube  
Training his devilish enginry, impal'd  
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,  
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood  
A while; but suddenly at head appear'd  
Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud.

Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;  
That all may see who hate us, how we seek  
Peace and composure, and with open breast  
Stand ready to receive them, if they like  
Our overture, and turn not back perverse;  
But that I doubt: however witness Heav'n!  
Heav'n witness thou anon! while we discharge  
Freely our part: ye who appointed stand,  
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch

I 5 What



What we propound, and loud that all may hear.  
So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce  
Had ended; when to right and left the front  
Divided, and to either flank retir'd: 570  
Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange!  
A triple mounted row of pillars, laid  
On wheels, for like to pillars most they seem'd,  
Or hollow'd bodies made of oak, or fir,  
With branches lop'd, in wood or mountain fell'd, 475  
Brass, iron, stony mold; had not their mouths  
With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide,  
Portending hollow truce: at each behind  
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed  
Stood waving tip'd with fire; while we suspense 580  
Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd:  
Not long! for sudden all at once their reeds  
Put forth, and to a narrow vent apply'd  
With nicest touch; immediate in a flame,  
But soon obscur'd with smoke, all Heav'n appear'd, 585  
From those deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar  
Embowel'd with outrageous noise the air,  
And all her entrails tore; disgorging foul  
Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts, and hail  
Of iron globes, which on the victor host 590  
Level'd, with such impetuous fury smote,  
That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,  
Though standing else as rocks; but down they fell  
By thousands, Angel on Arch-Angel roll'd;  
The sooner for their arms, unarm'd they might 595  
Have easily as spirits evaded swift  
By quick contraction or remove: but now  
Foul dissipation follow'd, and forc'd rout;  
Nor serv'd it to relax their ferried files:  
What should they do? if on they rush'd, repulse 600  
Repeated, and indecent overthrow  
Doubl'd, would render them yet more despis'd,  
And to their foes a laughter: for in view,  
Stood rank'd of Seraphim another row,

In



In posture to displode their second tire 605  
Of thunder: back defeated to return  
They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,  
And to his mates thus in derision call'd.

O friends, why come not on these victors proud?  
Erewhile they fierce were coming, and when we,  
To entertain them fair with open front,  
And breast, what could we more? propounded terms  
Of composition, straight they chang'd their minds,  
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
As they would dance: yet for a dance they seem'd 615  
Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps  
For joy of offer'd peace: but I suppose,  
If our proposals once again were heard,  
We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial in like gamesome mood: 620  
Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,  
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home;  
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,  
And stumbled many: who receives them right,  
Had need from head to foot well understand; 625  
Not understood, this gift they have besides,  
They show us when our foes walk not upright.  
So they among themselves in pleasant vein  
Stood scoffing, highten'd in their thoughts beyond  
All doubt of victory: eternal might 630  
To match with their inventions they presum'd  
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,  
And all his host derided, while they stood  
A while in trouble: but they stood not long;  
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms  
Against such hellish mischief fit t' oppose,  
Forthwith, behold the excellence, the pow'r,  
Which God hath in his mighty Angels plac'd!  
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills,  
For earth hath this variety from Heav'n, 640  
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale,  
Light as the light'ning glimpse they ran, they flew;

From



From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,  
They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,  
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops 645  
Up-lifting bore them in their hands. Amaze,  
Be sure, and terror, seiz'd the rebel host,  
When coming towards them, so dread they saw  
The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd;  
Till on those cursed engines triple-row 650  
They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence  
Under the weight of mountains buried deep:  
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads  
Main promontories flung, which in the air  
Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd: 655  
Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruis'd  
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain  
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan;  
Long struggling underneath, e're they could wind  
Out of such prison, though spirits of purest light: 660  
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.  
The rest in imitation to like arms  
Betook them, and the neighb'ring hills up tore:  
So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,  
Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire; 665  
That under ground they fought in dismal shade,  
Infernal noise! war seem'd a civil game  
To this uproar; horrid confusion heap'd  
Upon confusion rose. And now all Heav'n 670  
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread,  
Had not th' almighty Father, where he sits  
Shrin'd in his sanctuary of Heav'n secure,  
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen  
This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd:  
That his great purpose he might so fulfil, 675  
To honor his anointed Son aveng'd  
Upon his enemies, and to declare  
All pow'r on him transferr'd: whence to his Son,  
Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began.  
Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd, 680  
Son



Son in whose face invisable is beheld  
Visibly, what by deity I am;  
And in whose hand what by decree I do,  
Second Omnipotence! two days are past,  
Two days, as we compute the days of Heav'n, 685  
Since Michael and his Pow'rs went forth to tame  
These disobedient: fore hath been their fight,  
As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd:  
For to themselves I left them, and thou know'st,  
Equal in their creation they were form'd, 690  
Save what sin hath impair'd, which yet hath wrought  
Insensibly, for I suspend their doom:  
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last  
Endless, and no solution will be found.  
War wearied hath perform'd what war can do, 695  
And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,  
With mountains as with weapons arm'd; which makes  
Wild work in Heav'n, and dangerous to the main.  
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;  
For thee I have ordain'd it; and thus far 700  
Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine  
Of ending this great war, since none but thou  
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace  
Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know  
In Heav'n and Hell thy pow'r above compare: 705  
And this perverse commotion govern'd thus,  
To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir  
Of all things; to be Heir, and to be King  
By sacred unction, thy deserved right.  
Go then thou Mightiest in thy Father's might! 710  
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels  
That shake Heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,  
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms  
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh.  
Persue these sons of darkness, drive them out 715  
From all Heav'n's bounds into the utter deep:  
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise  
God and Messiah his anointed king.

He



He said, and on his Son with rays direct  
Shone full; he all his Father full express'd  
Ineffably into his face receiv'd:  
And thus the filial Godhead answer'ing spake.

O Father, O supreme of heav'nly Thrones,  
First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou always seek'st  
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,  
As is most just; this I my glory account,  
My exaltation, and my whole delight,  
That thou in me well pleas'd, declar'st thy will  
Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss:  
Scepter and pow'r, thy giving, I assume,  
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end  
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee  
For ever; and in me all whom thou lov'st:  
But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on  
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,  
Image of thee in all things: and shall soon,  
Arm'd with thy might, rid Heav'n of these rebell'd,  
To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,  
To chains of darkness, and th' undying worm;  
That from thy just obedience could revolt,  
Whom to obey is happiness entire,  
Then shall thy Saints unmix'd, and from th' impure  
Far separate, circling thy holy mount  
Unfeigned Hallelujahs to thee sing,  
Hymns of high praise, and I among them Chief.

So said, He o'er his sceptre bowing, rose  
From the right hand of glory where he sat;  
And the third sacred morn began to shine,  
Dawning through Heav'n. Forth rush'd with whirlwind  
The chariot of Paternal Deity,  
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,  
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd  
By four Cherubic shapes; four faces each  
Had wondrous; as with stars their bodies all  
And wings where set with eyes; with eyes the wheels  
Of beril, and careering fires between:

Over



Over their heads a chrystal firmament;  
Where on a saphir throne inlaid with pure  
Amber, and colors of the show'ry arch,  
He in celestial panoply all arm'd  
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,  
Ascended: at his right hand Victory  
Sate eagle-wing'd; beside him hung his bow  
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor'd;  
And from about him fierce effusion roll'd  
Of smoke and bickering flame and sparkles dire:  
Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,  
He onward came; far off his coming shone,  
And twenty thousand, I their number heard,  
Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen.  
He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime  
On the crySTALLIN sky, in saphir thron'd,  
Illustrious far and wide: but by his own  
First seen; them unexpected joy surpriz'd,  
When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd,  
Aloft by Angels borne, his sign in Heav'n:  
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd  
His army, circumfus'd on either wing,  
Under their Head imbodied all in one.  
Before him pow'r divine his way prepar'd;  
At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd  
Each to his place, they heard his voice and went  
Obsequious; Heav'n his wonted face renew'd,  
And with fresh flowrets hill and valley smil'd.

This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd,  
And to rebellious fight rallied their Pow'rs,  
Insensate! hope conceiving from despair:  
In heav'nly spirits could such perverseness dwell?  
But, to convince the proud what signs avail,  
Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent?  
They harden'd more by what might most reclaim,  
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight  
Took envy; and aspiring to his height,  
Stood reembattel'd fierce, by force or fraud



Weening to prosper, and at length prevail 795  
Against God and Messiah; or to fall  
In universal ruin last: and now  
To final battel drew, disdaining flight,  
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God  
To all his host on either hand thus spake. 800

Stand still in bright array, ye Saints, here stand  
Ye Angels arm'd, this day from battel rest:  
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God  
Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause:  
And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done 805  
Invincibly. But of this cursed crew  
The punishment to other hand belongs:  
Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:  
Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,  
Nor multitude: stand only and behold 810  
God's indignation on these godless pour'd  
By me; not you, but me they have despis'd,  
Yet envied: against me is all their rage,  
Because the Father, t' whom in Heav'n supreme  
Kingdom and pow'r and glory appertains, 815  
Hath honor'd me according to his will.  
Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd:  
That they may have their wish, to try with me  
In battel which the stronger proves; they all,  
Or I alone against them, since by strength 820  
They measure all, of other excellence  
Not emulous, nor care who them excels;  
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.

So spake the Son, and into terror chang'd  
His count'nance, too severe to be beheld! 825  
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.  
At once the four spread out their starry wings,  
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs  
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound  
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830  
He on his impious foes right onward drove,  
Gloomy as night: under his burning wheels

Thee



The stedfast empyrean shook throughout  
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon  
Among them he arriv'd; in his right hand 835  
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent  
Before him, such as in their souls infix'd  
Plagues: they astonish'd, all resistance lost,  
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt:  
O'er shields, and helms and helmed heads he rode 840  
Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate;  
That wish'd the mountains now might be again  
Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.  
Nor less on either side tempestuous fell  
His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd Four, 845  
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels  
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;  
One spirit in them rul'd, and every eye  
Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire  
Among th' accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength, 850  
And of their wonted vigor left them drain'd,  
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.  
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd  
His thunder in mid voly; for he meant  
Not to destroy, but root them out of Heav'n. 855  
The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd  
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,  
Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursued  
With terrors, and with furies, to the bounds  
And crystal wall of heav'n; which op'ning wide, 860  
Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd  
Into the wasteful deep: the monstrous sight  
Struck them with horror backward; but far worse  
Urg'd them behind: headlong themselves they threw  
Down from the verge of Heav'n; eternal wrath 865  
Burn'd after them to the bottomless pit.

Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, Hell saw  
Heav'n ruining from Heav'n, and would have fled  
Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep  
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870



Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roar'd,  
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall  
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout  
Incumber'd him with ruin! Hell at last  
Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd; 875  
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire  
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.

Disburden'd Heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repair'd  
Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.

Sole Victor, from th' expulsion of his foes 880  
Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd:

To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood  
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,  
With jubilee advanc'd; and as they went,  
Shaded with branching palm, each order bright 885

Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,  
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,  
Worthiest to reign: He celebrated rode  
Triumphant through mid-heav'n, into the courts  
And temple of his mighty Father thron'd 890  
On high; who into glory him receiv'd,  
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

Thus, measuring things in Heav'n by things on earth,  
At thy request, and that thou may'st beware  
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd 895

What might have else to human race been hid;  
The discord which befel, and war in heav'n  
Among th' Angelic Powr's, and the deep fall  
Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd  
With Satan, he who envies now thy state, 900

Who now is plotting how he may seduce  
Thee also from obedience, that with him  
Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake  
His punishment, eternal misery;

Which would be all his solace and revenge, 905  
As a despite done against the Most High,  
Thee once to gain companion of his woe:

But listen not to his temptations; warn

Thy



Thy weaker: let it profit thee to have heard,  
By terrible example, the reward 910  
Of disobedience: firm they might have stood,  
Yet fell: Remember, and fear to transgress.

*The End of the Sixth Book.*

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B O O K V I I.

Descend from Heav'n; Urania! by that name  
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine  
Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,  
Above the flight of Pegaséan wing.  
The meaning, not the name I call: for thou  
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top  
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but heav'nly born,  
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,  
Thou with eternal *Wisdom* didst converse,  
*Wisdom* thy sister, and with her didst play 10  
In presence of th' almighty Father, pleas'd  
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee  
Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns I have presum'd,  
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,  
Thy temp'ring: With like safety guided down, 15  
Return me to my native element:  
Lest from this flying steed unrein'd, as once  
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,  
Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall,  
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn. 20  
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound  
Within the visible diurnal sphere:  
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,  
More safe I sing with mortal voice; unchang'd  
To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days, 25  
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;  
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,  
And solitude! Yet not alone, while thou  
Visit'st my slumbers nightly; or when morn



Purples the east: still govern thou my song, 30  
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.

But drive far off the barbarous dissonance  
Of Bacchus and his revellers; the race  
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard  
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears 35  
To rapture, 'till the savage clamor drown'd  
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend  
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:  
For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.

Say, Goddess, what ensued when Raphaël, 40  
The affable Arch-Angel, had forewarn'd  
Adam, by dire example to beware  
Apostasy, by what befel in Heav'n  
To those apostates, lest the like befall  
In Paradise to Adam or his race, 45  
Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,  
If they transgress, and slight that sole command;  
So easily obey'd, amid the choice  
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,  
Though wand'ring.—He with his consoled Eve 50  
The story heard attentive, and was fill'd  
With admiration and deep muse, to hear  
Of things so high and strange, things to their thought  
So unimaginable, as hate in Heav'n,  
And war so near the peace of God in bliss, 55  
With such confusion: but the evil soon  
Driv'n back redounded as a flood on those  
From whom it sprung; impossible to mix  
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd  
The doubts that in his heart arose: and now 60  
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know  
What nearer might concern him, how this world  
Of Heav'n and earth conspicuous first began;  
When, and whereof created, for what cause,  
What within Eden or without was done 65  
Before his memory, as one whose drouth  
Yet scarce allay'd, still eyes the current stream,

Whose



Whose liquid murmur heard, new thirst exites,  
Proceeded thus to ask his heav'nly guest.

Great things, and full of wonder in our ears, 70  
Far diff'ring from this world, thou hast reveal'd,  
Divine interpreter! by favor sent  
Down from the empyréan, to forewarn  
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,  
Unknown; which human knowledge could not reach:  
For which to th' infinitely Good we owe  
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment  
Receive with solemn purpose to observe  
Immutably his sovereign will, the end  
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd 80  
Gently, for our instruction, to impart  
Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd  
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem'd,  
Deign to descend now lower, and relate  
What may no less perhaps avail us known, 85  
How first began this Heav'n, which we behold  
Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd  
Innumerable; and this which yields or fills  
All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd,  
Imbracing round this florid earth; what cause, 90  
Mov'd the Creator in his holy rest  
Through all eternity so late to build  
In Chaos; and the work begun, how soon  
Absolv'd, if unforbid thou may'st unfold  
What we, not to explore the secret ask 95  
Of his eternal empire, but the more  
To magnify his works, the more we know.  
And the great light of day yet wants to run  
Much of his race, though steep; suspense in Heav'n,  
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears, 100  
And longer will delay to hear thee tell  
His generation, and the rising birth  
Of nature from the unapparent deep:  
Or if the star of ev'ning, and the moon  
Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring 105



Silence, and sleep, list'ning to thee, will watch;  
Or we can bid his absence, 'till thy song  
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;  
And thus the Godlike Angel answer'd mild. 110

This also thy request, with caution ask'd,  
Obtain: though to recount almighty works,  
What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,  
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?  
Yet what thou can'st attain, which best may serve 115  
To glorify the Maker, and infer

Thee also happier, shall not be withheld  
Thy hearing: such commission from above  
I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire  
Of knowledge within bounds: beyond abstain 120

To ask, nor let thine own invention hope  
Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,  
Only omniscient, hath suppress'd in night,  
To none communicable in Earth or Heav'n:  
Enough is left besides to search and know. 125

But knowledge is as food, and needs no less  
Her temperance over appetite, to know  
In measure what the mind may well contain;  
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns  
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130

Know then, that after Lucifer from Heav'n,  
So call him, brighter once amidst the host  
Of Angels, than that star the stars among,  
Fell with his flaming legions through the deep  
Into his place, and the great Son return'd 135  
Victorious with his Saints, th' omnipotent  
Eternal Father from his throne beheld  
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.

At least our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought  
All like himself rebellious, by whose aid 140  
This inaccessible high strength, the seat  
Of deity supreme, us dispossest'd,  
He trusted to have seist'd, and into fraud

Drew



Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;  
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see 145  
Their station; Heav'n, yet populous, retains  
Number sufficient to possess her realms  
Though wide; and this high temple to frequent  
With ministeries due and solemn rites.  
But lest his heart exalt him in the harm 150  
Already done, to have dispeopled Heav'n,  
My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair  
That detriment, if such it be, to lose  
Self-lost, and in a moment will create  
Another world; out of one man a race 155  
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,  
Not here: 'till by degrees of merit rais'd  
They open to themselves at length the way  
Up hither; under long obedience try'd,  
And Earth be chang'd to Heav'n, and Heav'n to Earth,  
One kingdom, joy and union without end.  
Mean while inhabit lax, ye pow'rs of Heav'n!  
And thou my Word, begotten Son! by thee  
This I perform, speak thou, and be it done.  
My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee 165  
I send along: ride forth, and bid the deep  
Within appointed bounds be Heav'n and Earth:  
Boundless the deep, because I am who fill  
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.  
Though I, uncircumscrib'd myself, retire 170  
And put not forth my goodness which is free  
To act or not: necessity and change  
Approach not me, and what I will is fate.  
So spake th' Almighty, and to what he spake  
His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect. 175  
Immediate are the acts of God, more swift  
Than time or motion; but to human ears  
Cannot without process of speech be told,  
So told, as earthly notion can receive.  
Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heav'n, 180  
When such was heard declar'd th' Almighty's will;  
Glory



Glory they sung to the most High! good will  
To future men, and in their dwellings peace:  
Glory to him! whose just avenging ire  
Had driven out th' ungodly from his sight, 185  
And th' habitations of the just: to him  
Glory and praise: whose wisdom had ordain'd  
Good out of evil to create; instead  
Of spirits malign a better race to bring  
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190  
His good to worlds and ages infinite.

So sang the Hierarchies. Mean while the Son  
On his great expedition now appear'd,  
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd  
Of majesty divine: sapience and love 195  
Immense, and all his Father in him shone.  
About his chariot numberless were pour'd  
Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,  
And Virtues: winged spirits, and chariots wing'd  
From th' armory of God, where stand of old 200  
Myriads between two brazen mountains lodg'd  
Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,  
Celestial equipage! and now came forth  
Spontaneous, for within them spirit liv'd,  
Attendant on their Lord: Heav'n open'd wide 205  
Her ever during gates, harmonious sound  
On golden hinges moving, to let forth  
The King of Glory in his pow'rful Word,  
And Spirit coming to create new worlds.  
On heav'nly ground they stood, and from the shore 210  
They view'd the vast immeasurable Abyss,  
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild;  
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds,  
And surging waves, as mountains, to assault  
Heav'n's height, and with the center mix the pole. 215

Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace!  
Said then th' omnific Word, your discord end:—  
Nor stay'd, but on the wings of Cherubim  
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode



Far into Chaos, and the world unborn; 220  
For Chaos heard his voice. Him all his train  
Follow'd in bright procession, to behold  
Creation, and the wonders of his might.  
Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand  
He took the golden compasses, prepar'd 225  
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe  
This Universe, and all created things.  
One foot he center'd, and the other turn'd  
Round through the vast profundity obscure;  
And said, thus far extend, thus far thy bounds, 230  
This be thy just circumference, o World!

Thus God the heav'n created, thus the earth;  
Matter unform'd and void! Darkness profound  
Cover'd th' abyss, but on the watry calm  
His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread, 235  
And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth  
Throughout the fluid mass; but downward purg'd  
The black tartareous cold infernal dregs,  
Adverse to life: then founded, then conglob'd  
Like things to like; the rest to several place 240  
Disparted, and between spun out the air;  
And earth self-balanc'd on her centre hung.

Let there be light! said God; and forthwith light  
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure  
Sprung from the deep: and from her native east, 245  
To journey through the aery gloom began,  
Spher'd in a radiant cloud; for yet the sun  
Was not, she in a cloudy tabernacle  
Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good;  
And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250  
Divided: light the day, and darkness night  
He nam'd. Thus was the first day ev'n and morn:  
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung  
By the celestial quires, when orient light  
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld; 255  
Birth-day of Heav'n and Earth! with joy and shout  
The hollow universal orb they fill'd;



And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd  
God and his works, Creator him they sung,  
Both when first ev'ning was, and when first morn. 260

Again, God said, let there be firmament  
Amid the waters, and let it divide  
The waters from the waters! And God made  
The firmament expanse of liquid, pure,  
Transparent, elemental air, diffus'd 265  
In circuit to the uttermost convex  
Of this great round: partition firm and sure,  
The waters underneath from those above  
Dividing: for as earth, so he the world  
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide  
ChrySTALLIN ocean, and the loud misrule 270  
Of Chaos far remov'd; lest fierce extremes  
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:  
And Heav'n he nam'd the firmament: so ev'n  
And morning chorus sung the second day. 275

The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet  
Of waters, embryon immature, involv'd,  
Appear'd not: over all the face of earth  
Main ocean flow'd; not idle, but with warm  
Prolific humor soft'ning all her globe, 280  
Fermented the great mother to conceive,  
Sate with genial moisture, when God said,  
Be gather'd now ye waters under Heav'n  
Into one place, and let dry land appear!—  
Immediately the mountains huge appear 285  
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave  
Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky.  
So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low  
Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad and deep,  
Capacious bed of waters: Thither they 290  
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd,  
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:  
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,  
For haste; such flight the great command impress'd  
On the swift floods: as armies at the call 295

Of



Of trumpet, for of armies thou hast heard,  
Troop to their standard; so the wat'ry throng,  
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,  
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,  
Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill; 300  
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide  
With serpent error wand'ring, found their way,  
And on the wafhy ooze deep channels wore;  
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,  
All but within those banks, where rivers now 305  
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.  
The dry land, earth, and the great receptacle  
Of congregated waters, he call'd seas;  
And saw that it was good: and said, let th' earth  
Puth forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed, 310  
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,  
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth!——  
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, 'till then  
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,  
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad 315  
Her universal face with pleasant green,  
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowr'd  
Op'ning their various colors, and made gay  
Her bosom smelling sweet. And these scarce blown,  
Forth flourish'd thick the clustring vine, forth crept 320  
The smelling gourd, up stood the corny reed  
Embattl'd in her field; and th' humble shrub,  
And bush, with frizl'd hair implicit. Last,  
Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread  
Their branches hung with copious fruit; or gemm'd 325  
Their blossoms: with high woods the hills were crown'd;  
With tufts the vallies, and each fountain side,  
With borders long the rivers: that earth now  
Seem'd like to Heav'n; a seat where Gods might dwell,  
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt 330  
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd  
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground  
None was: but from the earth a dewy mist

Went



Went up, and water'd all the ground, and each  
Plant of the field; which, ere it was in th' earth, 335  
God made, and ev'ry herb, before it grew  
On the green stem: God saw that it was good,  
So Ev'n and Morn recorded the third Day.

Again th' Almighty spake: Let there be lights  
High in th' expanse of Heaven, to divide 340  
The day from night: and let them be for signs,  
For seasons, and for days, and circling years,  
And let them be for lights, as I ordain  
Their office in the firmament of Heav'n,  
To give light on the earth!——and it was so. 345  
And God made two great lights, great for their use  
To man, the greater to have rule by day,  
The less by night altern: and made the stars,  
And set them in the firmament of Heav'n,  
T' illuminate the earth, and rule the day, 350  
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,  
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,  
Surveying his great work, that it was good:  
For of celestial bodies first the Sun  
A mighty sphere! he fram'd; unlightsome first, 355  
Tho' of ethereal mold; then form'd the moon,  
Globose; and ev'ry magnitude of stars;  
And sow'd with stars the Heav'n, thick as a field.  
Of light by far the greater part he took,  
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd 360  
In the Sun's orb, made porous to receive  
And drink the liquid light, firm to retain  
Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light:  
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars  
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light, 365  
And hence the morning planet gilds her horns:  
By tincture, or reflection, they augment  
Their small peculiar, though from human sight  
So far remote, with diminution seen.  
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370  
Regent of day; and all th' horizon round



Invested with bright rays, jocond to run  
His longitude through Heav'n's high road: the gray  
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danc'd,  
Shedding sweet influence. Less bright the moon, 375  
But opposite in level'd west was set  
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light  
From him, for other light she needed none  
In that aspect: and still that distance keeps  
'Till night; then in the east her turn she shines, 380  
Revolv'd on Heav'n's great axle, and her reign  
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,  
With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd  
Spangling the hemisphere; then first adorn'd  
With the bright luminaries, that set and rose, 385  
Glad ev'ning and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.

And God said, let the waters generate  
Reptil with spawn abundant, living soul!  
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings  
Display'd on th' open firmament of Heav'n! 390  
And God created the great whales, and each  
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously  
The waters generated by their kinds!  
And every bird of wing after his kind;  
And saw that it was good, and blest'd them, saying, 395  
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas  
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;  
And let the fowl be multiply'd on th' earth.  
Forthwith the founts, and seas, each creek and bay  
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 400  
Of fish, that with their fins and shining scales  
Glide under the green wave in sculls, that oft  
Bank the mid sea: part single, or with mate,  
Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and thro' groves  
Of coral stray; or, sporting with quick glance, 405  
Shew to the Sun their wav'd coats, dropt with gold;  
Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend  
Moist nutriment, or under rocks their food,  
In jointed armour watch: on smooth the Seal

And



And bended Dolphins play: part huge of bulk 410  
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gate  
Tempest the ocean: there Leviathan,  
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep  
Stretch'd like a promontory sleeps or swims  
And seems a moving land, and at his gills 415  
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out a sea.  
Mean while the tepid caves, and fens and shores,  
Their brood as numerous hatch from th'egg, that soon  
Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd  
Their callow young; but feather'd soon and fledge 420  
They summ'd their pens, and soaring th' air sublime,  
With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud  
In prospect: there the eagle and the stork,  
On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build:  
Part loosely wing the region; part, more wise 425  
In common, rang'd in figure wedge their way,  
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth  
Their aery caravan, high over seas  
Flying, and over lands with mutual wing  
Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane 430  
Her annual voyage, born on winds; the air  
Floats, as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes.  
From branch to branch the smaller birds with song  
Solac'd the woods, and spread their painted wings  
'Till ev'n; nor then, the solemn nightingale 435  
Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays.  
Others on silver lakes and rivers bath'd  
Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck  
Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows  
Her state with oary feet: yet oft they quit 440  
The dank, and rising on stiff pennons, tower  
The mid aerial sky. Others on ground  
Walk'd firm; the crested cock, whose clarion sounds  
The silent hours; and th' other, whose gay train  
Adorns him, color'd with the florid hue 445  
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus  
With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,  
Ev'ning



Ev'ning and morn solemniz'd the fifth day.

The sixth, and of creation last arose  
With ev'ning harps and matin; when God said, 450  
Let th' earth bring forth soul living in her kind,  
Cattel and creeping things, and beast of th' earth,  
Each in their kind.—The earth obey'd; and straight  
Op'ning her fertil womb, teem'd at a birth  
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms, 455  
Limb'd and full grown. Out of the ground up rose  
As from his lair the wild beast where he wons  
In forest wild, in thicket, brake or den:  
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd;  
The cattel in the fields, and meadows green: 460  
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks  
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.  
The grassy clods now calv'd, now half appear'd  
The tawny lion, pawing to get free  
His hinder parts; then springs as broke from ponds, 465  
And rampant shakes his printred mane: the ounce,  
The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole  
Rising, the crumbl'd earth above them threw  
In hillocks: the swift stag from under ground  
Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould 470  
Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd  
His vastness: fleec'd the flocks and pleating rose,  
As plants: ambiguous between sea and land  
The river-horse and scaly crocodile.  
At once came forth whatever creeps the ground, 475  
Insect or worm: those wav'd their limber fans,  
For wings; and smallest lineaments exact  
In all the liveries deck'd of summers pride,  
With spots of gold, and purple, azure and green:  
These, as a line, their long dimension drew, 480  
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace: not all  
Minims of nature, some of serpent kind,  
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd  
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept  
The parsimonious emmet, provident 485  
Of



Of future, in small room large heart inclos'd,  
Pattern of just equality perhaps  
Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes  
Of commonalty: swarming next, appear'd  
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490  
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells  
With honey stor'd. The rest are numberless,  
And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,  
Needless to thee repeated: nor unknown  
The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field, 495  
Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes  
And hairy mane terrific, though to thee  
Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

Now heav'n in all her glory shone, and roll'd  
Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand 500  
First wheel'd their course; earth in her rich attire  
Consummate lovely smil'd; air, water, earth,  
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd  
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remain'd.  
There wanted yet the master work, the end 505  
Of all yet done; a creature, who not prone,  
And brute as other creatures, but indued  
With sanctity of reason, might erect  
His stature, and upright with front serene  
Govern the rest, self knowing; and from thence 510  
Magnanimous to correspond with Heav'n;  
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good  
Descends: thither with heart, and voice, and eyes  
Directed in devotion, to adore  
And worship God supreme, who made him chief 515  
Of all his works: therefore th' Omnipotent  
Eternal Father, for where is not he  
Present? thus to his Son audibly spake.

Let us make now Man in our image, Man  
In our similitude, and let them rule 520  
Over the fish, and fowl of sea and air,  
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,  
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground!

This



This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee O Man!  
Dust of the ground; and in thy nostrils breath'd 525  
The breath of life: in his own image he  
Created thee, in the image of God  
Express, and thou becam'st a living soul.  
Male he created thee, but thy consort  
Female, for race: then bless'd mankind, and said, 530  
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,  
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold  
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of th' air,  
And ev'ry living thing that moves on th' earth,  
Wherever thus created, for no place 535  
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,  
He brought thee into this delicious grove,  
This garden; planted with the trees of God;  
Delectable both to behold and taste:  
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food 540  
Gave thee, all sorts are here that all th' earth yields,  
Variety without end! but of the tree,  
Which tasted works knowledge of good and evil,  
Thou may'st not: in the day thou eat'st, thou dy'st:  
Death is the penalty impos'd, beware!  
And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin  
Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.

Here finish'd He, and all that he had made  
View'd, and behold! all was entirely good;  
So ev'n and morn accomplish'd the sixth day: 550  
Yet not 'till the Creator from his work  
Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd;  
Up to the Heav'n of Heav'n's, his high abode,  
Thence to behold this new created world,  
Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd 555  
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,  
Answering his great idea: Up he rode  
Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound  
Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tun'd.

Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air 560  
Resounded, thou remember'st, for thou heardst,



The Heav'n's and all the constellations rung:  
The planets in their station list'ning stood,  
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.  
Open, ye everlasting gates, they sung, 565  
Open, ye Heav'ns, your living doors; let in  
The great Creator, from his work return'd  
Magnificent, his six days work, a World!  
Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign  
To visit oft the dwellings of just men, 570  
Delighted; and with frequent intercourse  
Thither will send his winged messengers,  
On errands of supernal grace. So sung  
The glorious train ascending: He through Heav'n,  
That open'd wide her blazing portals, led, 575  
To God's eternal house direct the way;  
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold  
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear  
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way  
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest 580  
Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh  
Ev'ning arose in Eden, for the sun  
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,  
Forerunning night; when, at the holy mount  
Of Heav'n's high-seated top, th' imperial throne 585  
Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,  
The filial Pow'r arriv'd, and sat him dow'n  
With his great Father: for he also went  
Invisible, yet staid, such privilege  
Hath Omnipresence, and the work ordain'd, 590  
Author and end of all things; and from work  
Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the sev'nth day,  
As resting on that day from all his work:  
But not in silence holy kept; the harp  
Had work and rested not, the solemn pipe, 595  
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,  
All sounds on fret by string, or golden wire,  
Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice  
Choral, or unison: of incense clouds,

Fuming



Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount; 600  
Creation, and the six days acts, they sung.

Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite  
Thy pow'r! what thought can measure thee, or tongue  
Relate thee? Greater now in thy return  
Than from the giant Angels: Thee that day 605  
Thy thunders magnify'd; but to create  
Is greater, than created to destroy.

Who can impair thee, mighty King! or bound  
Thy empire? Easily the proud attempt  
Of spirits apostate, and their counsels vain, 610  
Thou hast repell'd; while impiously they thought  
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw  
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks  
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves  
To manifest the more thy might: his evil 615  
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.

Witness this new-made world, another Heav'n!  
From Heaven gate not far, founded in view  
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;  
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars 620

Numerous, and ev'ry star perhaps a world  
Of destin'd habitation; but thou know'st  
Their seasons: among these the seat of men,  
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfus'd,  
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men! 625  
And sons of men! whom God hath thus advanc'd.

Created in his image, there to dwell  
And worship him; and in reward to rule  
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air;  
And multiply a race of worshippers 630  
Holy and just: thrice happy if they know  
Their happiness, and persevere upright!

So sung they, and the empyrean rung  
With hallelujah's: Thus was Sabbath kept.  
And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd 635  
How first this world and face of things began,  
And what before thy memory was done



From the beginning, that posterity  
Inform'd by thee might know. If else thou seek'st  
Ought, not surpassing human measure, say. 640

*The End of the Seventh Book.*

B O O K VIII.

The Angel ended, and in Adam's ear  
So charming left his voice, that he a while  
Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear:  
Then, as new wak'd, thus gratefully reply'd.

What thanks sufficient, or what recompense 5  
Equal, have I to render thee, divine  
Historian? who thus largely hast allay'd  
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd  
This friendly condescension to relate  
Things, else by me unsearchable; now heard 10  
With wonder, but delight; and, as is due,  
With glory attributed to the high  
Creator. Something yet of doubt remains,  
Which only thy solution can resolve.  
When I behold this goodly frame, this world 15  
Of Heav'n and earth consisting; and compute  
Their magnitudes; this earth a spot, a grain,  
An atom, with the firmament compar'd,  
And all her number'd stars; that seem to roll  
Spaces incomprehensible, for such 20  
Their distance argues, and their swift return  
Diurnal, merely to officiate light  
Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,  
One day and night; in all their vast survey  
Useless besides: reasoning I oft admire, 25  
How Nature, wise and frugal, could commit  
Such disproportions; with superfluous hand,  
So many nobler bodies to create,  
Greater so manifold to this one use,  
For ought appears, and on their orbs impose 30  
Such



Such restless revolution day by day  
Repeated, while the sedentary earth,  
That better might with far less compass move,  
Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains  
Her end without least motion; and receives, 35  
As tribute, such a sumless journey brought  
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;  
Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.

So spake our fire, and by his count'nance seem'd  
Entring on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve 40  
Perceiving, where she sat retir'd in sight,  
With lowliness majestic from her seat,  
And grace, that won who saw to wish her stay;  
Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flow'rs,  
To visit how they prosper'd, but and bloom, 45  
Her nursery: they at her coming sprung,  
And touch'd by her fair tendance gladlier grew,  
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse  
Delighted, or not capable her ear  
Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd, 50  
Adam relating, the sole auditress:  
Her husband the relater she preferr'd  
Before the Angel, and of him to ask  
Chose rather: he, she knew, would intermix  
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute 55  
With conjugal caresses: from his lip  
Not words alone pleas'd her. O when meet now  
Such pairs, in love and mutual honor join'd?  
With Goddess-like demeanour forth she went;  
Not unattended! for on her, as Queen, 60  
A pomp of winning Graces waited still,  
And from about her shot darts of desire  
Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.  
And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt propos'd,  
Benevolent and facil thus reply'd. 65

To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heav'n  
Is as the book of God before thee set,  
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn



His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years :  
This to attain, whether Heav'n move or Earth, 70  
Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest  
From man or angel, the great Architect  
Did wisely to conceal; and not divulge  
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought  
Rather admire. Or, if they list to try 75  
Conjecture, he his fabric of the Heav'ns  
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move  
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide  
Hereafter; when they come to model Heav'n,  
And calculate the stars, how they will wield 80  
The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive  
To save appearances; how gird the sphere  
With centric and eccentric scribl'd o'er,  
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb.  
Already by thy reasoning this I guess, 85  
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest,  
That bodies bright and greater should not serve  
The less not bright, nor Heav'n such journeys run,  
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives  
The benefit. Consider first, that great 90  
Or bright infers not excellence: the earth  
Though, in comparison of Heav'n, so small,  
Nor glistering, may of solid good contain  
More plenty than the Sun, that barren shines;  
Whose virtue on itself works no effect, 95  
But in the fruitful earth: there first receiv'd  
His beams, unactive else, their vigor find.  
Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries  
Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.  
And for the Heav'n's wide circuit, let it speak 100  
The Maker's high magnificence; who built  
So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far;  
That man may know he dwells not in his own;  
An edifice too large for him to fill,  
Lodg'd in a small partition; and the rest 105  
Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.

The



The swiftneſs of thoſe circles attribute,  
Though numberleſs, to his omnipotence,  
That to corporeal ſubſtances could add  
Speed all moſt ſpiritual: me thou think'ſt not flow, 110  
Who ſince the morning-hour ſet out from Heav'n,  
Where God reſides; and ere mid-day arriv'd  
In Eden: diſtance inexpressible  
By numbers that have name! but this I urge,  
Admitting motion in the Heav'n's; to ſhew 115  
Invalid, that which thee to doubt it mov'd:  
Not that I ſo affirm, though ſo it ſeem  
To thee who haſt thy dwelling here on earth.  
God, to remove his ways from human ſenſe,  
Plac'd heav'n from earth ſo far, that earthly ſight, 120  
If it preſume, might err in things too high,  
And no advantage gain. What if the Sun  
Be center to the world; and other ſtars  
By his attractive virtue, and their own,  
Incited, dance about him various rounds? 125  
Their wand'ring courſe now high, now low, then hid,  
Progreſſive, retrograde, or ſtanding ſtill,  
In fix thou ſeeſt: and what if ſev'nth to theſe  
The planet earth, ſo ſtedfaſt though ſhe ſeem,  
Inſenſibly three different motions move? 130  
Which elſe to ſeveral ſpheres thou muſt aſcribe,  
Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities,  
Or ſave the ſun his labor, and that ſwift  
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb ſuppos'd,  
Inviſible elſe above all ſtars, the wheel 135  
Of day and night: which needs not thy belief,  
If earth induſtrious of herſelf, fetch day  
Travelling eaſt; and with her part averſe  
From the ſun's beam meet night; her other part  
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light, 140  
Sent from her through the wide tranſpicuous air,  
To the terreſtrial moon be as a ſtar,  
Inlightning her by day, as ſhe by night  
This earth, reciprocal? if land be there,



Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest 145  
 As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce  
 Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat  
 Allotted there: and other Suns perhaps  
 With their attendant moons thou wilt descry,  
 Communicating male and female light, 150  
 Which two great sexes animate the world,  
 Stor'd in each orb, perhaps, with some that live.  
 For such vast room in nature unpossess'd  
 By living soul, desert and desolate,  
 Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute 155  
 Each orb a glimpse of light, convey'd so far  
 Down to this habitable, which returns  
 Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.  
 But whether thus these things, or whether not,  
 Whether the sun, predominant in heav'n, 160  
 Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun;  
 He, from the east his flaming road begin;  
 Or she, from west her silent course advance,  
 With inoffensive pace, that spinning sleeps  
 On her soft axle, while she paces ev'n, 165  
 And bears thee soft with the smooth air along,  
 Sollicit not thy thoughts with matters hid,  
 Leave them to God above, him serve and fear.  
 Of other creatures, as him pleases best,  
 Where-ever plac'd, let him dispose: joy thou 170  
 In what he gives to thee, this paradise  
 And thy fair Eve: Heav'n is for thee too high  
 To know what passes there: be lowly wise:  
 Think only what concerns thee and thy being;  
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there 175  
 Live, in what state, condition or degree;  
 Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd,  
 Not of earth only, but of highest Heav'n.

To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, reply'd.  
 How fully hast thou satisfy'd me, pure 180  
 Intelligence of Heav'n, Angel serene!  
 And freed from intricacies taught to live,

The



The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts  
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which  
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares, 185  
 And not molest us, unless we ourselves  
 Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.  
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove  
 Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end:  
 'Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn, 190  
 That not to know at large of things remote  
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know  
 That which before us lies in daily life,  
 Is the prime wisdom: what is more, is fume,  
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence; 195  
 And renders us in things that most concern  
 Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.  
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend  
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand  
 Useful, whence haply mention may arise 200  
 Of something not unseasonable to ask,  
 By suff'rance, and thy wonted favor deign'd,  
 Thee I have heard relating what was done  
 Ere my remembrance: now, hear me relate  
 My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard: 205  
 And day is yet not spent, 'till then thou seest  
 How subtly to detain thee I devise,  
 Inviting thee to hear while I relate,  
 Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:  
 For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heav'n, 210  
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear  
 Than fruits of Palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst  
 And hunger both, from labor, at the hour  
 Of sweet repast: they satiate, and soon fill  
 Tho' pleasant; but thy words with grace divine 215  
 Imbued, bring to their sweetnesss no satiety.

Tho whom thus Raphael answer'd heav'nly meek.  
 Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men!  
 Nor tongue ineloquent: for God on thee  
 Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd, 220



Inward and outward both, his image fair:  
 Speaking or mute all comeliness and grace  
 Attends thee, and each word, each motion, forms:  
 Nor less think we in Heav'n of thee on Earth,  
 Than of our fellow-servant; and inquire 225  
 Gladly into the ways of God with Man:  
 For God we see hath honor'd thee, and set  
 On Man his equal love. Say therefore on;  
 For I that day was absent, as befel,  
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230  
 Far on excursion toward the gates of hell,  
 Squar'd in full legion, such command we had,  
 To see that none thence issu'd forth a spy,  
 Or enemy, while God was in his work,  
 Lest he, incens'd at such eruption bold, 235  
 Destruction with creation might have mix'd.  
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt;  
 But us he sends upon his high behests  
 For state, as Sov'reign King; and to inure  
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut 240  
 The dismal gates, and parricado'd strong!  
 But long e're our approaching heard within  
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song!  
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.  
 Glad we return'd up to the coast of light 245  
 Ere Sabbath ev'ning: so we had in charge.  
 But thy relation now! for I attend,  
 Pleas'd with thy words no less than thou with mine.

So spake the Godlike Pow'r, and thus our fire.  
 For Man to tell how human life began 250  
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?  
 Desire with thee still longer to converse  
 Induc'd me. — As new wak'd from foundest sleep,  
 Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid,  
 In balmy sweat; which with his beams the sun 255  
 Soon dry'd, and on the reaking moisture fed.  
 Straight toward heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,  
 And gaz'd a while the ample sky; 'till rais'd

By



By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,  
As thitherward indeavoring, and upright 260  
Stood on my feet. About me round I saw  
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,  
And liquid lapse of murm'ring streams: by these,  
Creatures that liv'd, and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew;  
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd: 265  
With fragrance, and with joy, my heart o'erflow'd.  
Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb  
Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran  
With supple joints, as lively vigor led.  
But who I was, or where, or from what cause, 270  
Knew not: to speak I try'd, and forthwith spake;  
My tongue obey'd, and readily could name  
Whate'er I saw. Thou Sun, said I, fair light!  
And thou inlighten'd Earth, so fresh and gay!  
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods and plains! 275  
And ye that live and move, fair creatures! tell,  
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?  
Not of myself——By some great Maker then,  
In goodness and in pow'r praeeminent.  
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore, 280  
From whom I have that thus I move and live,  
And feel that I am happier than I know.  
While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,  
From where I first drew air, and first beheld  
This happy light; when answer none return'd, 285  
On a green shady bank profuse of flow'rs  
Pensive I sat me down. There gentle sleep  
First found me, and with soft oppression seis'd  
My droused sense, untroubl'd, though I thought  
I then was passing to my former state 290  
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:  
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,  
Whose inward apparition gently mov'd  
My fancy, to believe I yet had being,  
And liv'd. One came, methought, of shape divine, 295  
And said, "Thy mansion wants thee, Adam, rise,  
"First



" First man, of men innumerable ordain'd  
 " First Father! call'd by thee I come thy guide  
 " To the garden of blifs, thy feat prepar'd. "  
 So faying, by the hand he took me rais'd; 300  
 And over fields and waters, as in air,  
 Smood fliding without step, last led me up  
 A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,  
 A circuit wide, inclos'd, with goodliest trees  
 Planted, with walks, and bow'rs; that what I saw 305  
 Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree  
 Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to th' eye  
 Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite  
 To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found  
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310  
 Had lively shadow'd. Here had new begun  
 My wand'ring, had not he, who was my guide  
 Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,  
 Prefence divine! rejoicing, but with awe,  
 In adoration at his feet I fell 315  
 Submits: he rear'd me, and "whom thou sought'st I am,  
 Said mildly, "Author of all this thou seest  
 "Above, or round about thee, or beneath.  
 "This Paradise I give thee, count it thine  
 "To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat: 320  
 "Of every tree that in the garden grows  
 "Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth;  
 "But of the tree whose operation brings  
 "Knowledge of good and ill, which I have fet  
 "The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith, 325  
 "Amid the garden by the Tree of Life,  
 "Remember what I warn thee! shun to taste,  
 "And shun the bitter consequence; for know,  
 "The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command  
 "Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt dye; 330  
 "From that day mortal: and this happy state  
 "Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world  
 "Of woe and sorrow."——Sternly he pronounc'd  
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds

Yet



Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice 335  
Not to incur: but soon his clear aspect  
Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd.

"Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth

"To thee and to thy race I give: as Lords

"Possess it, and all things that therein live, 340

"Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl;

"In sign whereof, each bird, and beast, behold

"After their kinds: I bring them to receive

"From thee their names, and pay thee fealty

"With low subjection: understand the same 345

"Of fish within their watry residence,

"Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change

"Their element to draw the thinner air,"

As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold

Approaching, two and two; these, cowering low 350

With blandishment; each bird stoop'd on his wing.

I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood

Their nature, with such knowledge God indu'd

My sudden apprehension! but in these

I found not what methought I wanted still; 355

And to the heav'nly Vision thus presum'd.

O by what name, for thou above all these,

Above mankind, or ought than mankind higher,

Surpassest far my naming, how may I

Adore thee, Author of this universe, 360

And all this good to man? For whose well-being

So amply, and with hand so liberal

Thou hast provided all things. But with me

I see not who partakes: in solitude

What happiness, who can enjoy alone? 365

Or all enjoying, what contentment find?

Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,

As with a smile more brighten'd, thus reply'd.

What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth

With various living creatures, and the air 370

Replenish'd, and all these at thy command

To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not

Their



Their language and their ways? They also know,  
And reason not contemptibly: with these  
Find pastime, and bear rule? thy realm is large. 375

So spake the universal Lord, and seem'd  
So ordering: I, with leave of speech implor'd,  
And humble deprecation, thus reply'd.

Let not my words offend thee, heav'nly Pow'r,  
My Maker, be propitious while I speak! 380

Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,  
And these inferior far beneath me set?

Among unequals what society  
Can fort, what harmony, or true delight?

Which must be mutual, in proportion due 385  
Giv'n and receiv'd: but in disparity,

The one intense, the other still remiss,  
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove

Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak  
Such as I seek, fit to participate 390

All rational delight; wherein the brute  
Cannot be human consort: they rejoice

Each with their kind, lion with lioness;  
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd:

Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl 395  
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape:

Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.  
Whereto th' Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd.

A nice and subtle happiness I see  
Thou to thyself propos'st, in the choice 400

Of thy associates, Adam; and wilt taste  
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.

What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?  
Seem I to thee sufficiently possess

Of happiness or not, who am alone 405  
From all eternity? for none I know

Second to me, or like; equal much less.  
How have I then with whom to hold converse,

Save with the creatures which I made, and those  
To me inferior, infinite descents 410

Beneath



Beneath what other creatures are to thee?

He ceas'd, I lowly answer'd. To attain  
The height and depth of thy eternal ways,  
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!  
Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee 415  
Is no deficiency found. Not so is Man,  
But in degree; the cause of his desire,  
By conversation with his like to help,  
Or solace his defect. No need that thou  
Should'st propagate, already Infinite; 420  
And through all numbers absolute, though one.  
But Man by number is to manifest  
His single imperfection; and beget  
Like of his like, his image multiply'd:  
In unity defective, which requires 425  
Collateral love, and dearest amity.  
Thou in thy secrecy although alone,  
Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not  
Social communication: yet, so pleas'd,  
Canst raise thy creature, to what height thou wilt 430  
Of union or communion, deify'd:  
I by conversing cannot these erect  
From prone, nor in their ways complacence find.

Thus I imbolden'd spake, and freedom us'd  
Permissive, and acceptance found; which gain'd 435  
This answer from the gracious voice divine.

Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd;  
And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,  
Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself:  
Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 440  
My image, not imparted to the brute:  
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee,  
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike;  
And be so minded still. I, e're thou spak'st,  
Knew it not good for man to be alone: 445  
And no such company as then thou saw'st  
Intended thee; for tryal only brought,  
To see how thou could'st judge of fit and meet.

What



What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,  
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 450  
Thy wish, exactly to thy heart's desire.

He ended, or I heard no more, for now  
My earthly by his heav'nly overpower'd,  
Which it had long stood under, strain'd to th' height  
In that celestial colloquy sublime, 455

As with an object that excels the sense,  
Dazl'd and spent, sunk down, and sought repair  
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd  
By nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.

Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell 460

Of fancy, my internal sight: by which,  
Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,  
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape  
Still glorious before whom awake I stood:

Who stooping open'd my left side, and took 465

From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,  
And life-blood streaming fresh: wide was the wound,  
But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd.

The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands:

Under his forming hands a creature grew 470

Man-like, but different sex: so lovely fair!

That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now

Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd,

And in her looks; which from that time infus'd

Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before: 475

And into all things from her air inspir'd

The spirit of love, and amorous delight.

She disappear'd, and left me dark! I wak'd

To find her, or for ever to deplore

Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure. 480

When out of hope, behold her! not far off;

Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd

With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow,

To make her amiable: On she came,

Led by her heav'nly Maker, though unseen, 485

And guided by his voice; nor uninform'd

Of



Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:  
 Grace was in all her steps, Heav'n in her eye,  
 In every gesture dignity and love.  
 I overjoy'd could not forbear aloud. 490

This turn hath made amends; Thou hast fulfill'd  
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign!  
 Giver of all things fair! but fairest this  
 Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see  
 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself 495  
 Before me: Woman is her name, of Man  
 Extracted: for this cause he shall forego  
 Father and mother, and t' his wife adhere;  
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.

She heard me thus, and tho' divinely brought, 500  
 Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,  
 Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,  
 That would be woo'd, and not unfought be won,  
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd,  
 The more desirable: or, to say all,  
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,  
 Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn'd;  
 I follow'd her; she what was honor knew,  
 And with obsequious majesty approv'd,  
 My pleaded reason.——To the nuptial bow'r 510  
 I led her blushing like the morn: all Heav'n,  
 And happy constellations, on that hour  
 Shed their selectest influence: the earth  
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill:  
 Joyous the birds; fresh gales, and gentle airs 515  
 Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings  
 Flung rose, flung odors from the spicy shrub,  
 Disporting! till the amorous bird of night  
 Sung spousal, and bid haste the ev'ning star  
 On this hill-top, to light the bridal lamp. 520

Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought  
 My story to the sum of earthly blifs,  
 Which I enjoy; and must confess to find  
 In all things else delight indeed, but such



As us'd or not, works in the mind no change, 525  
Nor vehement desire; these delicacies  
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flow'rs,  
Walks, and the melody of birds: but here  
Far otherwise, transported I behold,  
Transported touch: here passion first I felt, 530  
Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else  
Superior, and unmov'd; here only weak,  
Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.  
Or Nature fail'd in me, and left some part  
Not proof enough such object to sustain; 535  
Or from my side subducting, took perhaps  
More than enough: at least, on her bestow'd  
Too much of ornament; in outward show  
Elaborate, of inward less exact.  
For well I understand in the prime end 540  
Of Nature, her th' inferior, in the mind  
And inward faculties, which most excel:  
In outward also her resembling less  
His image who made both; and less expressing  
The character of that dominion giv'n 545  
O'er other creatures. Yet, when I approach  
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems  
And in herself complete, so well to know  
Her own; that what she wills to do or say,  
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discretest, best: 550  
All higher knowledge in her presence falls  
Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her  
Loses discountenanc'd, and like folly shews:  
Authority and reason on her wait,  
As one intended first, not after made 555  
Occasionally: and, to consummate all,  
Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat  
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe  
About her, as a guard Angelic plac'd.

To whom the Angel with contracted brow. 560  
Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part;  
Do thou but thine, and be not diffident

Of



Of wisdom: she deserts thee not, if thou  
Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh;  
By attributing over-much to things 565  
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.  
For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so?  
An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well  
Thy cherishing, thy honoring, and thy love;  
Not thy subjection. Weigh with her thyself; 570  
Then value: oft-times nothing profits more  
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right,  
Well manag'd: of that skill the more thou know'st,  
The more she will acknowledge thee her Head,  
And to realities yield all her shows: 575  
Made so adorn for thy delight the more;  
So awful, that with honor thou may'st love  
Thy mate; who sees, when thou art seen least wise.  
But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind  
Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580  
Beyond all other; think the same vouchsaf'd  
To cattel, and each beast; which would not be  
To them made common, and divulg'd, if ought  
Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue  
The soul of man, or passion in him move. 585  
What higher in her society thou find'st  
Attractive, human, rational, love still:  
In loving thou dost well, in passion not;  
Wherein true love consists not. Love refines  
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat 590  
In reason, and is judicious: is the scale  
By which to heav'nly love thou may'st ascend;  
Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause,  
Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.  
To whom thus, half abash'd, Adam reply'd. 595  
Neither her out-side form'd so fair, nor ought  
In procreation common to all kinds,  
Though higher of the genial bed by far,  
And with mysterious reverence I deem,  
So much delights me, as those graceful acts, 600



Those thousand decencies that daily flow  
From all her words and actions mix'd with love  
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd  
Union of mind, or in us both one soul;  
Harmony to behold in wedded pair, 605  
More grateful than harmonious sound to th' ear.

Yet these subject not: I to thee disclose  
What inward thence I feel; not therefore foil'd;  
Who meet with various objects, from the sense  
Variouſly representing; yet ſtill free, 610  
Approve the beſt, and follow what I approve.

To love thou blaſt me not; for love thou ſay'ſt  
Leads up to Heav'n, is both the way and guide;  
Bear with me then, if lawful what I aſk:  
Love not the heav'nly ſpirits? And how their love 615  
Exprefs they? By looks only? Or do they mix  
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?

To whom the Angel, with a ſmile that glow'd  
Celeſtial roſy-red, love's proper hue,  
Answer'd. Let it ſuffice thee that thou know'ſt 620  
Us happy, and without love no happineſs.

Whatever pure thou in thy body enjoy'ſt,  
And pure thou wert created, we enjoy  
In eminence: and obſtacle find none  
Of membrane, joint, or limb, excluſive bars: 625

Eaſier than air with air, if ſpirits embrace,  
Total they mix; union of pure with pure  
Deſiring: nor reſtrain'd conveyance need,  
As fleſh to mix with fleſh, or ſoul with ſoul.

But I can now no more: the parting ſun 630  
Beyond the earth's green cape, and verdant iſles,  
Heſperian ſets, my ſignal to depart.

Be ſtrong, live happy, and love! But, firſt of all,  
Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep  
His great command: take heed leſt paſſion ſway 635

Thy judgment to do ought, which elſe free will  
Would not admit: thine, and of all thy ſons,  
The weal or woe in thee is plac'd; beware!

I in



I in thy persevering shall rejoice,  
 And all the blest. Stand fast! to stand or fall 640  
 Free in thine own arbitrement it lies:  
 Perfect within, no outward aid require,  
 And all temptation to transgress repel.

So saying, he arose: whom Adam thus  
 Follow'd with benediction. Since to part, 645  
 Go heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger,  
 Sent from whose sov'reign goodness I adore!  
 Gentle to me and affable hath been  
 Thy condescension, and shall be honor'd ever  
 With grateful memory: thou to mankind, 650  
 Be good and friendly still, and oft return!

So parted they, the Angel up to Heav'n  
 From the thick shade, and Adam to his bow'r.

*The End of the Eighth Book.*

B O O K I X.

No more of talk where God or Angel guest  
 With Man, as with his friend, familiar us'd  
 To sit indulgent, and with him partake  
 Rural repast; permitting him the while  
 Venial discourse unblam'd. I now must change 5  
 Those notes to tragic! Foul distrust, and breach  
 Disloyal on the part of man, revolt,  
 And disobedience: on the part of Heav'n,  
 Now alienated! distance, and distaste,  
 Anger, and just rebuke, and judgement giv'n, 10  
 That brought into this world a world of woe,  
 Sin, and her shadow Death, and Misery,  
 Death's harbinger. Sad task! yet argument  
 Not less, but more heroic than the wrath  
 Of stern Achilles on his foe pursu'd 15  
 Thrice fugitive about Troy wall: or rage  
 Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd,  
 Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long



Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's son:  
 If answerable stile I can obtain 20  
 Of my celestial patroness, who deigns  
 Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,  
 And dictates to me slumb'ring; or inspires  
 Easy my unpremeditated verse:  
 Since first this subject for Heroic song 25  
 Pleas'd me, long chusing, and beginning late;  
 Not sedulous by nature to indite  
 Wars, hitherto the only argument  
 Heroic deem'd; chief mast'ry to dissect  
 With long and tedious havock fabled Knights 30  
 In battels feign'd: the better fortitude  
 Of patience, and Heroic Martyrdom,  
 Unsung; or to describe Races, and Games,  
 Or tilting furniture, emblazon'd shields,  
 Impresses quaint, caparisons, and steeds; 35  
 Bases, and tinsel trappings, gorgeous Knights  
 At joust and torneament: then marshal'd feast  
 Serv'd up in hall with sewers, and seneschals:  
 The skill of artifice, or office, mean;  
 Not that which justly gives Heroic name 40  
 To person, or to poem. Me of these  
 Nor skill'd, nor studious, higher argument  
 Remains; sufficient of itself to raise  
 That name, unless an age too late, or cold  
 Climate, or years damp my intended wing 45  
 Depress'd: and much they may, if all be mine,  
 Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.  
 The Sun was sunk, and after him the star  
 Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring  
 Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter 50  
 'Twixt day and night, and now, from end to end,  
 Night's hemisphere had veil'd th' horizon round:  
 When Satan who late fled before the threats  
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd  
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent 55  
 On man's destruction, maugre what might hap  
 Of



Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.  
By night he fled, and at midnight return'd  
From compassing the earth; cautious of day,  
Since Uriel, regent of the Sun, descry'd 60  
His entrance, and forewarn'd the Cherubim,  
That kept their watch: thence full of anguish driv'n,  
The space of sev'n continu'd nights he rode  
With darkness; thrice the equinoctial Line  
He circled; four times cross'd the car of Night 65  
From Pole to Pole, traversing each Colure;  
On th' eighth return'd, and on the coast averse  
From entrance, or Cherubic watch, by stealth  
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,  
Now not, tho' sin, not time, first wrought the change,  
Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,  
Into a gulph shot under ground, 'till part  
Rose up a fountain by the Tree of Life.  
In with the river sunk, and with it rose  
Satan, involv'd in rising mist; then sought 75  
Where to lie hid: sea he had search'd, and land,  
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool  
Maeotis, up beyond the river Ob:  
Downward as far antarctic: and in length,  
West from Orontes, to the ocean barr'd 80  
At Darien: thence, to the land where flows  
Ganges, and Indus. Thus the orb he roam'd  
With narrow search; and with inspection deep  
Consider'd every creature, which of all  
Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found 85  
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.  
Him after long debate, irresolute  
Of thoughts revol'd, his final sentence chose  
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom  
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 90  
From sharpest sight: for in the wily snake  
Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,  
As from his wit and native subtlety  
Proceeding; which in other beasts observ'd



Doubt might beget of diabolic pow'r 95  
Active within, beyond the sense of brute.

Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward grief  
His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd.

O Earth, how like to Heav'n! if not preferr'd  
More justly, seath worthier of Gods, as built 100  
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!  
For what God after better worse would build?  
Terrestrial Heav'n, danc'd round by other Heav'ns  
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,  
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems, 105  
In thee concentrating all their precious beams  
Of sacred influence! As God in Heav'n  
Is center, yet extends to all; so thou  
Centring, receiv'st from all those orbs: in thee,  
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears 110  
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth  
Of creatures animate with gradual life,  
Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in Man.  
With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,  
If I could joy in ought: sweet interchange 115  
Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains!  
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd,  
Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these  
Find place or refuge: and the more I see  
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120  
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege  
Of contraries: all good to me becomes  
Bane; and in Heav'n much worse would be my state;  
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav'n  
To dwell, unless by mast'ring Heav'n's Supreme: 125  
Nor hope to be myself less miserable  
By what I seek, but others to make such  
As I, though thereby worse to me redound.  
For only in destroying I find ease  
To my relentless thoughts; and him destroy'd, 130  
Or won to what may work his utter loss,  
For whom all this was made; all this will soon



Follow, as to him link'd in weal or woe:  
In woe then! that destruction wide may range.  
To me shall be the glory sole among 135  
Th' infernal Pow'rs, in one day to have marr'd  
What he *Almighty* styl'd, six nights and days  
Continu'd making; and who knows how long  
Before had been contriving? though perhaps  
Not longer than since I, in one night, freed 140  
From servitude inglorious well nigh half  
Th' Angelic name, and thinner left the throng  
Of his adorers. He, to be aveng'd,  
And to repair his numbers thus impair'd;  
Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd 145  
More Angels to create, if they at least  
Are his created, or, to spite us more,  
Determin'd to advance into our room  
A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,  
Exalted from so base original! 150  
With heav'nly spoils; our spoils. What he decreed,  
He effected; Man he made, and for him built  
Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,  
Him Lord pronounc'd; and, o indignity!  
Subjected to his service Angel wings, 155  
And flaming ministers, to watch and tend  
Their earthly charge. Of these the vigilance  
I dread, and to elude, thus wrap'd in mist  
Of midnight vapor glide obscure, and pry  
In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160  
The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds  
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.  
O foul descent! that I, who erst contended  
With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrain'd  
Into a beast; and mix'd with bestial slime, 165  
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,  
That to the height of Deity aspir'd!  
But what will not ambition, and revenge,  
Descend to? who aspires, must down as low,  
As high he soar'd; obnoxious, first or last, 170



To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,  
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils:

Let it; I reckon not, so it light well aim'd!

Since higher I fall short, on him who next

Provokes my envy, this new favorite

175

Of Heav'n, this man of clay, son of despite,

Whom, us the more to spite, his maker rais'd

From dust, spite then with spite is best repaid.

So saying, through each thicket, dank or dry,

Like a black mist low creeping, he held on

180

His midnight search, where soonest he might find

The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found,

In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd;

His head the midst, well stor'd with subtle wiles:

Not yet in horrid shade, or dismal den,

185

Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,

Fearless unfear'd he slept. In at his mouth

The Devil enter'd; and his brutal sense,

In heart, or head, possessing, soon inspir'd

With act intelligential; but his sleep

190

Disturb'd not, waiting close th' approach of morn.

Now when as sacred light began to dawn

In Eden on the humid flow'rs, that breath'd

Their morning incense, when all things that breathe,

From th' earth's great altar send up silent praise

195

To the Creator, and his nostrils fill

With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,

And join'd their vocal worship to the quire

Of creatures wanting voice: that done, partake

The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs:

200

Then commune, how that day they best may ply

Their growing work, for much their work outgrew

The hands dispatch of two, gard'ning so wide,

And Eve first to her husband thus began.

Adam, well may we labor still to dress

205

This garden, still to tend plant, herb and flow'r,

Our pleasant task injoin'd; but 'till more hands

Aid us, the work under our labor grows

Luxu-



Luxurious by restraint: what we by day  
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,      210  
One night or two with wanton growth derides  
Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,  
Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present:  
Let us divide our labors: thou, where choice  
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind  
The woodbine round this arbor, or direct  
The clasping ivy where to climb: while I,  
In yonder spring of roses, intermix'd  
With myrtle, find what to redress till noon.  
For while so near each other thus all day      220  
Our task we choose, what wonder if so near  
Looks intervene, and smiles, or object new  
Casual discourse draw on; which intermits  
Our day's-work, brought to little, though begun  
Early, and th' hour of supper comes unearn'd.      225

To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd.  
Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond  
Compare, above all living creatures dear!  
Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd,  
How we might best fulfil the work, which here      230  
God hath assign'd us; nor of me shalt pass  
Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found  
In woman, than to study household good,  
And good works in her husband to promote.  
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd      235  
Labor, as to debar us when we need  
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,  
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse  
Of looks and smiles, for smiles from reason flow,  
To brute deny'd, and are of love the food;      240  
Love, not the lowest end of human life.  
For not to irksome toil, but to delight  
He made us, and delight to reason join'd.  
These paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands  
Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide      245  
As we need walk; till younger hands ere long



Affist us. But, if much converse perhaps  
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:  
For solitude sometimes is best society,  
And short retirement urges sweet return. 250

But, other doubt possesses me; least harm  
Befall thee sever'd from me: for thou know'st  
What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe  
Envyng our happiness, and of his own  
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame 255

By fly assault: and somewhere nigh at hand  
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find  
His wish, and best advantage, us asunder;  
Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each  
To other speedy aid might lend at need; 260

Whether his first design be to withdraw  
Our fealty from God; or to disturb  
Conjugal love; than which perhaps no bliss  
Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more:  
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side 265

That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.  
The wife, where danger or dishonor lurks,  
Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,  
Who guards her, or with her the worst indures.

To whom the virgin majesty of Eve, 270  
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,  
With sweet austere composure thus reply'd.

Offspring of Heav'n and earth, and all earth's Lord!  
That such an enemy we have, who seeks  
Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn, 275  
And from the parting Angel over-heard,  
As in a shady nook I stood behind,

Just then return'd at shut of ev'ning flow'rs.  
But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt  
To God or thee, because we have a foe 280  
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.

His violence thou fear'st not, being such  
As we, not capable of death, or pain,  
Can either not receive, or can repel.

His



His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers 285  
Thy equal fear, that my firm faith, and love,  
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduc'd;  
Thoughts, which how found they harbor in thy breast,  
Adam, mis-thought of her to thee so dear?

To whom with healing words Adam reply'd. 290  
Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve!  
For such thou art, from sin and blame entire:  
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade  
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid  
Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe. 295  
For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperges  
The tempted with dishonor foul; suppos'd  
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof  
Against temptation. Thou thyself with scorn  
And anger would'st resent the offer'd wrong, 300  
Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,  
If such affront I labor to avert

From thee alone, which on us both at once  
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;  
Or daring, first on me th' assault shall light. 305  
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn:  
Subtile he needs must be, who could seduce  
Angels: nor think superfluous other's aid.  
I, from the influence of thy looks, receive  
Access in every virtue; in thy sight 310  
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were  
Of outward strength, while shame, thou looking on,  
Shame to be overcome, or over-reach'd,  
Would utmost vigor raise, and rais'd unite.  
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel 315  
When I am present, and the tryal chuse  
With me, best witness of thy virtue try'd?

So spake domestic Adam in his care,  
And matrimonial love: but Eve, who thought  
Less attributed to her faith sincere, 320  
Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd.

If this be our condition, thus to dwell

In



In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,  
Subtle or violent, we not indued  
Single with like defence, where ever met, 325  
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?  
But harm precedes not sin: only our foe  
Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem  
Of our integrity; his foul esteem  
Sticks no dishonor on our front, but turns 330  
Foul on himself: then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd  
By us? who rather double honor gain  
From his surmise prov'd false, and peace within,  
Favor from Heav'n, our witness from th' event.  
And what is faith, love, virtue unassay'd 335  
Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?  
Let us not then suspect our happy state  
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,  
As not secure to single, or combin'd:  
Frail is our happiness, if this be so, 340  
And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.  
To whom thus Adam fervently reply'd,  
O woman! best are all things as the will  
Of God ordain'd them: His creating hand  
Nothing imperfect or deficient left 345  
Of all that he created; much less man,  
Or ought that might his happy state secure:  
Secure from outward force; within himself  
The danger lies, yet lies within his pow'r.  
Against his will he can receive no harm. 350  
But God left free the will; for what obeys  
Reason, is free; and reason he made right:  
But bid her well beware, and still erect,  
Lest by some fair appearing good surpris'd,  
She dictate false, and misinform the will 355  
To do what God expressly hath forbid.  
Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoins,  
That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.  
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,  
Since reason not impossible may meet

Some



Some specious object, by the foe suborn'd;  
And fall into deception unaware,  
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.  
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid  
Were better; and most likely, if from me 365  
Thou sever not; trial will come unsought.  
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy? approve  
First thy obedience; th' other who can know,  
Not seeing thee attempted? who attest?  
But if thou think, trial unsought may find 370  
Us both securer, than thus warn'd thou seem'st—  
Go! for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;  
Go in thy native innocence! rely  
On what thou hast of virtue; summon all:  
For God tow'rds thee hath done his part, do thine.

So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve  
Persisted, yet submits, though last, reply'd.  
With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd,  
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words  
Touch'd only; that our tryal, when least sought, 380  
May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd,  
The willinger I go: nor much expect  
A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;  
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.

Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand 385  
Soft she withdrew; and like a Wood-Nymph light  
Oread, or Dryad, or of Delia's train,  
Betook her to the groves: but Delia's self  
In gait surpass'd, and Goddess-like deport;  
Though not, as she, with bow and quiver arm'd; 390  
But with such gard'ning tools as art, yet rude,  
Guileless of fire had form'd, or Angels brought.  
To Pales, or Pomona thus adorn'd,  
Likeliest she seem'd, Pomona, when she fled  
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime, 395  
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.  
Her long with ardent look his eye persn'd  
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.

Ofc



Oft he to her his charge of quick return  
Repeated; she to him as oft engag'd  
To be return'd by noon amid the bow'r;  
And all things in best order, to invite  
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.  
O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve!  
Of thy presum'd return! event perverse!  
Thou never from that hour in Paradise  
Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose!  
Such ambush, laid among sweet flow'rs, and shades,  
Waited with hellish rancor imminent  
To intercept thy way, or send thee back  
Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss!——  
For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,  
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,  
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find  
The only two of mankind; but in them  
The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.  
In bow'r and field he sought, where any tuft  
Of grove, or garden-plot more pleasant lay,  
Their tendance or plantation for delight,  
By fountain, or by shady rivulet.  
He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find  
Eve separate; he wish'd, but not with hope  
Of what so seldom chanc'd: when to his wish,  
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,  
Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,  
Half-spy'd, so thick the roses blushing round  
About her glow'd; half-stooping to support  
Each flow'r of slender stalk, whose head though gay  
Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold,  
Hung drooping unsustain'd; them she upstays  
Gently with myrtle-band; mindless the while  
Herself, though fairest, unsupported flow'r,  
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh!  
Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd  
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine or palm;  
Then voluble and bold; now hid, now seen,  
Among



Among thick-woven arborets and flow'rs  
Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve:  
Spot more delicious than those gardens feign'd  
Or of reviv'd Adonis: or renown'd 440  
Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son;  
Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king  
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.  
Much he the place admir'd, the person more:  
As one who long in populous city pent, 445  
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,  
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe  
Among the pleasant villages, and farms  
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight;  
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450  
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;  
If chance, with Nymphlike step, fair virgin pass,  
What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more;  
She most, and in her look sums all delight:  
Such pleasure took the serpent to behold 455  
This flow'ry plat, the sweet recess Eve  
Thus early, thus alone: her heav'nly form  
Angelic, but more soft, and feminine,  
Her graceful innocence, her every air  
Of gesture or least action overaw'd 460  
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd  
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought.  
That space the Evil-one abstracted stood  
From his own evil, and for the time remain'd  
Stupidly good; of enmity disarm'd, 465  
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge;  
But the hot hell that always in him burns,  
Though in mid Heav'n, soon ended his delight;  
And tortures him now more, the more he sees  
Of pleasure not for him ordain'd: then soon 470  
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts  
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.

Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet  
Compulsion thus transported to forget



What hither brought us! hate, not love, nor hope  
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste  
 Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,  
 Save what is in destroying; other joy  
 To me is lost. Then let me not let pass  
 Occasion which now smiles; behold alone 480

The woman, opportune to all attempts!  
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,  
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,  
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb  
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mold, 485

Foe not formidable! exempt from wound;  
 I not: so much hath Hell debas'd, and pain  
 Infeebled me, to what I was in Heav'n!  
 She fair, divinely fair! fit love for Gods;  
 Not terrible, though terror be in love 490

And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate;  
 Hate, stronger under shew of love well feign'd;  
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.

So spake the enemy of mankind, inclos'd  
 In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve 495  
 Address'd his way: not with indented wave,  
 Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,  
 Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd  
 Fold above fold, a surging maze! His head  
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes; 500  
 With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect  
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass  
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape,  
 And lovely! Never since of serpent-kind  
 Lovelier; not those that in Illyria chang'd 505  
 Hermione and Cadmus; or the God  
 In Epidaurus: nor to which transform'd  
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen;  
 He, with Olympias; this, with her who bore  
 Scipio the height of Rome. With tract oblique 510  
 At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd  
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way:

As



As when a ship, by skilfull steers-man wrought  
Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind  
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail: 515  
So varied he, and of his tortous train  
Curl'd many a wanton wreath, in sight of Eve,  
To lure her eye: she busied, heard the sound  
Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as us'd  
To such disport before her through the field, 520  
From every beast; more duteous at her call,  
Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.  
He bolder now, uncall'd before her stood;  
But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd  
His turret crest; and sleek enamel'd neck, 525  
Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.  
His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length  
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad  
Of her attention gain'd, with serpent-tongue  
Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530  
His fraudulent temptation thus began.

Wonder not, sov'reign Mistress! if perhaps  
Thou canst, who art sole wonder; much less arm  
Thy looks, the Heav'n of mildness, with disdain,  
Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze 535  
Insatiate; I thus single; nor have fear'd  
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.  
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair!  
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine  
By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore, 540  
With ravishment beheld! there best beheld,  
Where universally admir'd: but here  
In this inclosure wild, these beasts among,  
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern  
Half what in thee is fair, one man except, 545  
Who sees thee, and what is one! who shouldst be seen  
A Goddess among Gods, ador'd and serv'd  
By Angels numberless, thy daily train.

So glaz'd the tempter, and his proem tun'd:  
Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550



Though at the voice much marvelling: at length,  
Not unamaz'd, she thus in answer spake.

What may this mean? Language of man pronounc'd  
By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?

The first, at least, of these I thought deny'd 555

To beasts; whom God, on their creation-day,

Created mute to all articulate sound:

The latter I demur; for in their look,

Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.

Thee, serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560

I knew, but not with human voice indued.

Redouble then this miracle, and say,

How cam'st thou speakable of mute; and how

To me so friendly grown above the rest

Of brutal kind, that daily are in fight? 565

Say! for such wonder claims attention due.

To whom the guileful tempter thus reply'd:

Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!

Easy to me it is to tell thee all

What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be obey'd.

I was at first as other beasts that grace

The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,

As was my food! nor ought but food discern'd

Or sex; and apprehended nothing high,

Till on a day roving the field, I chanc'd 575

A goodly tree far distant to behold,

Loaden with fruit of fairest colors mix'd,

Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;

When from the boughs a savoury odor blown,

Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense 580

Than smell of sweetest fenel, or the teats

Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at ev'n,

Unfuck'd of lamb, or kid, that tend their play.

To satisfy the sharp desire I had

Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd 585

Not to defer: hunger and thirst at once,

Pow'rful persuaders! quicken'd at the scent

Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.

About



About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;  
For, high from ground, the branches would require  
Thy utmost reach, or Adam's: Round the tree  
All other beasts that saw, with like desire  
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.  
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung  
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill      595  
I spar'd not; for such pleasure till that hour  
At feed, or fountain, never had I found.  
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive  
Strange alteration in me, to degree  
Of reason in my inward pow'rs; and speech      600  
Wanted not long; though to this shape retain'd.  
Thenceforth to speculations high, or deep,  
I turn'd my thoughts; and with capacious mind  
Consider'd all things visible in heav'n,  
Or earth, or middle; all things fair and good!      605  
But all that fair and good, in thy divine  
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heav'nly ray  
United I beheld: no fair to thine  
Equivalent, or second! which compell'd  
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come      610  
And gaze, and worship thee, of right declar'd  
Sov'reign of creatures, universal dame!

So talk'd the spririted sly snake: and Eve,  
Yet more amaz'd, unwary thus reply'd.  
Serpent! thy overpraising leaves in doubt      615  
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd.  
But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far?  
For many are the trees of God that grow  
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown  
To us, in such abundance lies our choice,      620  
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd:  
Still hanging incorruptible, till men  
Grow up to their provision, and more hands  
Help to disburden nature of her birth.

To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad;      625  
Empress! the way is ready, and not long,



Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,  
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past  
Of blowing myrrh, and balm: if thou accept  
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon. 630

Lead then, said Eve. He leading swiftly roll'd  
In tangles, and made intricate seem strait,  
To mischief swift: hope elevates, and joy  
Brightens his crest: as when a wand'ring fire,  
Compact of unctuous vapor, which the night 635  
Condenses, and the cold environs round,  
Kindled through agitation to a flame,  
Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,  
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,  
Misleads th' amaz'd night-wanderer from his way 640  
To bogs and mires, and oft thro' pond or pool,  
There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far:  
So glister'd the dire snake, and into fraud  
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree  
Of prohibition, root of all our woe: 645

Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.  
Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,  
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess:  
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;  
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects! 650  
But of this tree we may not taste, nor touch,  
God so commanded; and left that command  
Sole daughter of his voice: the rest, we live  
Law to ourselves, our reason is our law.

To whom the tempter guilefully reply'd: 655  
Indeed! Hath God then said that of the fruit  
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,  
Yet Lords declar'd of all in earth, or air?

To whom thus Eve, yet sinless. Of the fruit  
Of each tree in the Garden we may eat; 660  
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst  
The Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat  
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

She scarce had said, tho' brief, when now more bold  
The



The tempter, but with shew of zeal and love 665  
To man, and indignation at his wrong,  
New part puts on; and as to passion mov'd,  
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely, and in act  
Rais'd, as of some great matter to begin.

As when of old some Orator renown'd, 670  
In Athens, or free Rome, where eloquence  
Florish'd, since mute! to some great cause address'd,  
Stood in himself collected; while each part,  
Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue;  
Sometimes in height began, as no delay 675  
Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right;  
So standing, moving, or to height up-grown,  
The tempter all impassion'd thus began.

O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,  
Mother of science! now I feel thy pow'r 680  
Within me clear; not only do discern  
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways  
Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.

Queen of this universe! do not believe  
Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die: 685  
How should ye? by the fruit? it gives you life  
To knowledge: by the threatner? look on me,  
Me! who have touch'd, and tasted; yet both live,  
And life more perfect have attain'd than fate  
Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot. 690

Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast  
Is open? Or will God incense his ire  
For such a petty trespass, and not praise  
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain  
Of death denounc'd, whatever thing death be, 695  
Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead

To happier life, knowledge of good and evil?  
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil  
Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?  
God therefore cannot hurt you, and be just: 700

Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:  
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.



Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe;  
Why, but to keep you low and ignorant,  
His worshippers: He knows that in the day 705  
You eat thereof, your eyes, that seem so clear,  
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then  
Open'd and clear'd: and ye shall be as Gods,  
Knowing both Good and Evil, as they know.  
That ye shall be as Gods, since I as Man, 710  
Internal Man, is but proportion meet:  
I of brute, human, ye of human, Gods.  
So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off  
Human, to put on Gods; death to be wish'd,  
Tho' threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring. 715  
And what are Gods, that man may not become  
As they, participating God-like food?  
The Gods are first, and that advantage use  
On our belief, that all from them proceeds:  
I question it, for this fair earth I see, 720  
Warm'd by the Sun, producing every kind;  
Them nothing: if they all things, who inclos'd  
Knowledge of Good and Evil in this tree,  
That who so eats thereof, forthwith attains  
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies 725  
Th' offence, that man should thus attain to know?  
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree  
Impart against his will, if all be his?  
Or is it envy, and can envy dwell  
In heav'nly breasts? These, these, and many more  
Causes import your need of this fair fruit:  
Goddeſs humane, reach then, and freely taſte!  
He ended, and his words, replete with guile,  
Into her heart too eaſy entrance won:  
Fix'd on the fruit ſhe gaz'd, which to behold 735  
Might tempt alone: and in her ears the ſound  
Yet rung of his perſuaſive words, impregn'd  
With reaſon, to her ſeeming, and with truth:  
Mean while the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd  
An eager appetite, rais'd by the ſmell 740

So



So favoury of that fruit; which with desire,  
Inclinable now grown to touch, or taste,  
Solicited her longing eye: yet first  
Pausing a while, thus to herself she mus'd.

Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits! 745  
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd,  
Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay  
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught  
The tongue not made for speech, to speak thy praise:  
Thy praise he also who forbids thy use, 750  
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree  
Of knowledge; knowledge both of good and evil:  
Forbids us then to taste: but his forbidding  
Commends thee more, while it infers the good  
By thee communicated, and our want: 755

For good unknown, sure is not had; or had  
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.  
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,  
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?  
Such prohibitions bind not.——But if death 760

Bind us with after-bands, what profits then  
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat  
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, whe shall die.——  
How dies the serpent? he hath eat'n and lives,  
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns;  
Irrational till then. For us alone

Was death invented? or to us deny'd  
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?  
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first  
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy 770  
The good befall'n him, author unsuspect,  
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.

What fear I then, rather what know to fear  
Under this ignorance of good and evil,  
Of god or death, of law or penalty? 775

Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine!  
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,  
Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then



To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour 780

Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:

Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat

Sighing through all her works gave sign of woe,

That all was lost. Back to the thicker flunk

The guilty serpent, and well might, for Eve 785

Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else

Regarded; such delight till then, as seem'd,

In fruit she never tasted, whether true

Or fancy'd so, through expectation high

Of knowledge; nor was God-head from her thought.

Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,

And knew not eating death. Sate at length,

And highten'd as with wine, jocund and boon

Thus to herself she pleasingly began.

O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all trees 795

In Paradise! of operation blest

To sapience! hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,

And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end

Created: but henceforth my early care,

Not without song, each morning, and due praise, 800

Shall tend thee, and the fertil burden ease

Of thy full branches offer'd free to all:

Till dieted by thee, I grow mature

In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know:

Though others envy what they cannot give; 805

For had the gift been theirs, it had not here

Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,

Best guide; not following thee, I had remain'd

In ignorance, thou open'st wisdom's way,

And giv'st access, though secret she retire. 810

And I perhaps am secret: Heav'n is high,

High, and remote to see from thence distinct

Each thing on earth; and other care, perhaps,

May have diverted from continual watch

Our great forbidding, safe with all his spies 815

About him.——But, to Adam in what sort

Shall



Shall I appear? shall I to him make known  
As yet my change, and give him to partake  
Full happiness with me? or rather not;  
But keep the odds of knowledge in my pow'r, 820  
Without copartner? so to add what wants  
In female sex, the more to draw his love,  
And render me more equal, and perhaps,  
A thing not undesirable, sometime  
Superior: for inferior who is free? 825  
This may be well.—But, what if God hath seen,  
And death ensue? Then I shall be no more,  
And Adam wedded to another Eve,  
Shall live with her injoying, I extinct;  
A death to think! Confirm'd then I resolve, 830  
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:  
So dear I love him, that with him, all deaths  
I could indure; without him live no life.

So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd,  
But first low reverence done, as to the Pow'r 835  
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd  
Into the plant scintial sap, deriv'd  
From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,  
Waiting desirous her return, had wove  
Of choicest flow'rs a garland, to adorn 840  
Her tresses, and her rural labors crown:  
As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.  
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new  
Solace in her return, so long delay'd:  
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill, 845  
Misgave him; he the faltring measure felt;  
And forth to meet her went, the way she took  
That morn, when first they parted. By the Tree  
Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,  
Scarce from the tree returning: in her hand 850  
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd,  
New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.  
To him she hasted; in her face excuse  
Came prologue, and apology too prompt;

Which,



Which with bland words at will she thus addrest. 855

Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?

Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, depriv'd

Thy presence, agony of love till now

Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more

Mean I to try, what rash untry'd I sought, 860

The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange

Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear,

This Tree is not as we are told, a Tree

Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown

Op'ning the way; but of divine effect 865

To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;

And hath been tasted such. The serpent wise,

Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,

Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become

Not dead, as we are threaten'd; but thenceforth 870

Indued with human voice, and human sense,

Reasoning to admiration: and with me

Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I

Have also tasted, and have also found

Th' effects to correspond: opener mine eyes, 875

Dim erst; dilated spirits, ampler heart,

And growing up to Godhead; which for thee

Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise:

For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss:

Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon. 880

Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot

May join us; equal joy, as equal love:

Left, thou not tasting, different degree

Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce

Deity for thee, when fate will not permit. 885

Thus Eve with count'nance blithe her story told;

But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.

On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard

The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,

Astonied stood and blank; while horror chill 890

Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd:

From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve

Down



Down dropt, and all the faded Roses shed:  
Speechless he stood and pale! till thus at length  
First to himself he inward silence broke.

895

O fairest of creation, last and best  
Of all God's works! Creature in whom excell'd  
Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,  
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!  
How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost,  
Defac'd, deflowr'd, and now to death devote?  
Rather how hast thou yielded to transgress  
The strict forbiddance! how, to violate  
The sacred fruit forbidd'n! some cursed fraud  
Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown;  
And me with thee hath ruin'd; for with thee  
Certain my resolution is to die!

900

905

How can I live without thee! how forgo  
Thy sweet converse and love, so dearly join'd,  
To live again in these wild woods forlorn!

910

Should God create another Eve, and I  
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee  
Would never from my heart! no, no! I feel  
The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,  
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state  
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe!

915

So having said, as one from sad dismay  
Recomforted, and, after thoughts disturb'd,  
Submitting to what seem'd remediless,  
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd.

920

Bold deed thou hast presum'd, adventurous Eve!  
And peril great provok'd, who thus hast dar'd,  
Had it been only coveting to eye  
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence;  
Much more to taste it under ban to touch.

925

But past who can recall, or done undo?  
Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate: yet so  
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact  
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,  
Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first

930

Made



Made common and unhallow'd e're our taste:  
 Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives,  
 Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live as man  
 Higher degree of life: inducement strong  
 To us, as likely tasting to attain 935  
 Proportional ascent; which cannot be  
 But to be Gods, or Angels, Demi-gods.  
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise!  
 Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy  
 Us his prime creatures; dignified so high, 940  
 Set over all his works; which in our fall,  
 For us created, needs with us must fail,  
 Dependent made: so God shall uncreate,  
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labor lose;  
 Not well conceiv'd of God: who tho' his pow'r 945  
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loath  
 Us to abolish; lest the Adversary  
 Triumph and say: "Fickle their state whom God  
 "Most favors! who can please him long? Me first  
 "He ruin'd, now mankind: whom will he next?" 950  
 Matter of scorn, not to be giv'n the Foe.  
 However I with thee have fix'd my lot,  
 Certain to undergo like doom: if death  
 Confort with thee, death is to me as life:  
 So forcible within my hearth I feel 955  
 The bond of nature draw me to my own,  
 My own in thee! for what thou art is mine:  
 Our state cannot be sever'd, we are one,  
 One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.

So Adam; and thus Eve to him reply'd. 960  
 O glorious tryal of exceeding love,  
 Illustrious evidence, example high,  
 Ingaging me to emulate! but short  
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,  
 Adam? from whose dear side I boast me sprung? 965  
 And gladly of or union hear thee speak,  
 One heart, one soul in both! whereof good proof  
 This day affords; declaring thee resolv'd,

Rather



Rather than death or ought than death more dread,  
Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear! 970  
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,  
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit:  
Whose virtue, for of good still good proceeds,  
Direct, or by occasion, hath presented  
This happy trial of thy love; which else 975  
So eminently never had been known.  
Were it I thought Death menac'd would ensue  
This my attempt, I would sustain alone  
The worst, and not persuade thee; rather die  
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact 980  
Pernicious to thy peace, chiefly assur'd  
Remarkably so late of thy so true,  
So faithful love unequal'd; but I feel  
Far otherwise th' event, not death, but life  
Augmented; open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys, 985  
Taste so divine! that what of sweet before  
Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.  
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,  
And fear of death deliver to the winds.

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy 990  
Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love  
Had so innobled, as of choice t'incur  
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.  
In recompense, for such compliance bad  
Such recompense best merits, from the bough 995  
She gave him of that fair inticing fruit  
With liberal hand: he scrupl'd not to eat,  
Against his better knowledge; not deceiv'd,  
But fondly overcome with female charm.  
Earth trembl'd from her entrails, as again 1000  
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan.  
Sky'lour'd, and mutt'ring thunder, some sad drops  
Wept, at compleating of the mortal sin  
Original! while Adam took no thought,  
Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate 1005  
Her former trespass fear'd; the more to sooth  
Him,



Him, with her lov'd society: that now,  
 As with new wine intoxicated both,  
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel  
 Divinity within them breeding wings,  
 Wherewith to scorn the earth. But that false fruit  
 Far other operation first display'd,  
 Carnal desire inflaming: he on Eve  
 Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him  
 As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn:  
 Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.

Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,  
 And elegant, of sapience no small part;  
 Since to each meaning favor we apply,  
 And palate call judicious: I the praise  
 Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.  
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd  
 From this delightful fruit, nor known till now  
 True relish, tasting: if such pleasure be  
 In things to us forbidd'n, it might be wish'd,  
 For this one tree had been forbidden ten.  
 But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,  
 As meet is, after such delicious fare:  
 For never did thy beauty since the day  
 I saw thee first, and wedded thee, adorn'd  
 With all perfections, so inflame my sense  
 With ardor to enjoy thee; fairer now  
 Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree!

So said he, and forbore not glance, or toy  
 Of amorous intent; well understood  
 Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.  
 Her hand he seiz'd and to a shady bank,  
 Thick over-head with verdant roof imbow'd,  
 He led her nothing loath: flow'r's were the couch,  
 Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,  
 And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.  
 There they their fill of love, and love's disport  
 Took largely; of their mutual guilt the seal,  
 The solace of their sin: till dewy sleep

Oppress'd



Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play. 1045

Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,  
That with exhilarating vapor bland  
About their spirits had play'd, and inmost pow'rs  
Made err, was now exhal'd; and grosser sleep,  
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams 1050  
Incumber'd, now had left them; up they rose  
As from unrest, and each the other viewing,  
Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds  
How darken'd! Innocence, that, as a veil  
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone: 1055  
Just confidence, and native righteousness  
And honor from about them, naked left  
To guilty shame: he cover'd, but his robe  
Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,  
Herculean Sampson, from the harlot-lap 1060  
Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd  
Shorn of his strength. They, destitute, and bare  
Of all their virtue: silent, and in face  
Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute:  
Till Adam, though no less than Eve abash'd, 1065  
At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd.

O Eve! in evil hour thou didst give ear  
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught  
To counterfeit man's voice; true in our fall,  
False in our promis'd rising: since our eyes 1070  
Open'd we find indeed, and find we know  
Both Good and Evil; Good lost, and Evil got.  
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,  
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,  
Of innocence, of faith, of purity, 1075  
Our wonted ornaments, now soil'd and stain'd!  
And in our faces evident the signs  
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;  
Ev'n shame, the last of evils; of the first  
Be sure then.—How shall I behold the face 1080  
Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy  
And rapture so oft beheld? those heav'nly shapes

O

Will



Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze  
 Insufferably bright. O, might I here  
 In solitude live savage, in some glade 1085  
 Obscur'd, where highest woods impenetrable  
 To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad  
 And brown as evening! Cover me, ye Pines!  
 Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs  
 Hide me, where I may never see them more! 1090  
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise  
 What best may for the present serve to hide  
 The parts of each from other, that seem most  
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen:  
 Some tree, whose broath smooth leaves together sow'd,  
 And girded on our loins, may cover round  
 Those middle parts, that this new comer, Shame,  
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.

So counsel'd he, and both together went  
 Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose 1100  
 The Fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd;  
 But such as at this day, to Indians known  
 In Malabar, or Decan, spreads her arms  
 Branching so broad and long, that in the ground  
 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow 1105  
 About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade  
 High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:  
 There oft the Indian herdsman shunning heat  
 Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds  
 At loopholes cut thro' thickest shade: those leaves  
 They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe,  
 And with what skill they had, together sow'd,  
 To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide  
 Their guilt, and dreaded shame! O, how unlike  
 To that first naked glory! such of late 1115  
 Columbus found th' American, so girt  
 With feather'd cincture; naked else, and wild  
 Among the trees, on isles and woody shores.  
 Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought, their shame in part  
 Cover'd, but not at rest or ease of mind, 1120  
 They



They sat them down to weep! nor only tears  
Rain'd at their eyes; but high winds worse within  
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,  
Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook sore  
Their inward state of mind; calm region once 1125  
And full of peace; now tost and turbulent!  
For understanding rul'd not, and the will  
Heard not her lore; but in subjection now  
To sensual appetite, who from beneath  
Usurping, over sov'reign reason claim'd 1130  
Superior sway: from thus distemper'd breast,  
Adam estrang'd in look and alter'd style,  
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd.

Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words, and stay'd  
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange 1135  
Desire of wand'ring this unhappy morn,  
I know not whence possess'd thee! We had then  
Remain'd still happy; not, as now, despoil'd  
Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.  
Let none henceforth seek needless cause t' approve  
The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek  
Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail.

To whom, soon mov'd with touch of blame, thus Eve:  
What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam severe!  
Imput'st thou that to my default, or will 1145  
Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows  
But might as ill have happen'd thou being by;  
Or to thyself perhaps: hadst thou been there,  
Or here th' attempt, thou could'st not have discern'd  
Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake; 1150  
No ground of enmity between us known,  
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.  
Was I to have never parted from thy side?  
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.  
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the Head, 1155  
Command me absolutely not to go,  
Going into such danger, as thou said'st?  
Too facil then, thou didst not much gainsay,



Nay didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.  
 Hadst thou been firm, and fix'd in thy dissent, 1160  
 Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.

To whom then first incens'd Adam reply'd:  
 Is this the love, is this the recompense  
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! express'd  
 Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I; 1165  
 Who might have liv'd, and joy'd immortal bliss:  
 Yet willingly chose rather death with thee.  
 And am I now upbraided, as the cause  
 Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,  
 It seems, in my restraint! What could I more? 1170  
 I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee; foretold  
 The danger, and the lurking enemy  
 That lay in wait: beyond this had been force;  
 And force upon free will hath here no place.  
 But confidence then bore thee on; secure 1175  
 Either to meet no danger, or to find  
 Matter of glorious trial: and perhaps  
 I also err'd, in overmuch admiring  
 What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought  
 No evil durst attempt thee: but I rue 1180  
 That error now, which is become my crime;  
 And thou th' accuser! Thus it shall befall  
 Him, who to worth in woman overtrusting,  
 Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;  
 And left to herself, if evil thence ensue, 1185  
 She first his weak indulgence will accuse.—

Thus they in mutual accusation spent  
 The fruitless hours; but neither self-condemning:  
 And of their vain contest appear'd no end.

*The End of the Ninth Book.*

## B O O K X.

Mean while the hainous and despiteful act  
 Of Satan, done in Paradise, and how  
 He in the serpent had perverted Eve,

Her



Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,  
Was known in Heav'n: for what can 'scape the eye 5  
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart  
Omniscient? Who, in all things wise and just,  
Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind  
Of man, with strength entire, and free-will arm'd,  
Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd 10  
Whatever whiles of foe or seeming friend:  
For still they knew, and ought t' have still remember'd,  
The high injunction, not to taste that fruit,  
Whoever tempted: which they not obeying,  
Incurr'd, what could they less? the penalty, 15  
And manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.

Up into Heav'n from Paradise in haste  
Th' Angelic Guards ascended, mute and sad  
For man; for of his state by this they knew:  
Much wond'ring how the subtle fiend had stol'n 20  
Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news  
From earth arriv'd at Heaven gate, displeas'd  
All were who heard: dim sadness did not spare  
That time celestial visages; yet mix'd  
With pity, violated not their blifs. 25  
About the new-arriv'd, in multitudes  
Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know  
How all befel: they towards the Throne supreme  
Accountable made haste to make appear  
With righteous plea their utmost vigilance; 30  
And easily approv'd: when the Most High  
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud  
Amidst, in thunder utter'd thus his voice.

Assembled Angels, and ye Pow'rs return'd  
From unsuccessful charge! be not dismay'd, 35  
Nor troubl'd at these tidings from the earth,  
Which your sincerest care could not prevent,  
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,  
When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from Hell,  
I told you then he should prevail, and speed 40  
On his bad errand; Man should be seduc'd,



And flatter'd out of all, believing lies  
Against his Maker: no decree of mine  
Concurring to necessitate his fall,  
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse 45  
His free will, to her own inclining left  
In even scale. But fall'n he is: and now  
What rests, but that the mortal Sentence pass  
On his transgression, death denounc'd that day?  
Which he presumes already vain and void, 50  
Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,  
By some immediate stroke: but soon shall find  
Forbearance no acquittance e're day end.

Justice shall not return, as bounty, scorn'd.  
But whom send I to judge them? whom, but thee 55  
Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferr'd  
All judgment, whether in Heav'n, or Earth, or Hell.  
Easy it may be seen that I intend  
Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee,  
Man's friend, his mediator, his design'd 60  
Both ransom and redeemer voluntary;  
And destin'd man himself, to judge man fall'n.

So spake the Father, and unfolding bright  
Tow'rd the right hand his Glory, on the Son  
Blaz'd forth unclouded Deity: He full 65  
Resplendent all his Father manifest  
Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd mild.

Father Eternal! Thine is to decree;  
Mine both in Heav'n and Earth to do thy will  
Supreme; that thou in me thy Son belov'd 70  
Mayst ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge  
On earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,  
Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light,  
When time shall be; for so I undertook  
Before thee; and not repenting, this obtain 75  
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom  
On me deriv'd: yet I shall temper so  
Justice with Mercy, as may illustrate most  
Them fully satisfy'd, and thee appease.

Atten-



Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none 80  
Are to behold the judgment, but the judg'd,  
Those two: the third best absent is condemn'd;  
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:  
Conviction to the serpent none belongs.

Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose 85  
Of high collateral glory: Him Thrones, and Pow'rs,  
Princedom, and Dominations ministrant,  
Accompanied to Heaven-gate: from whence  
Eden, and all the coast in prospect lay.  
Down he descended straight: the speed of Gods 90  
Time counts not, tho' with swiftest minutes wing'd.  
Now was the Sun in western cadence low  
From noon; and gentle airs, due at their hour,  
To fan the earth now wak'd, and usher in  
The ev'ning cool; when he, from wrath more cool, 95  
Came, the mild Judge, and Intercessor both,  
To sentence man: the voice of God they heard,  
Now walking in the garden, by soft winds  
Brought to their ears, while day declin'd: they heard,  
And from his presence hid themselves, among 100  
The thickest trees, both man and wife: till God  
Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud.

Where art thou Adam, wont with joy to meet  
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,  
Not pleas'd; thus entertain'd with solitude, 105  
Where obvious duty e're-while appear'd unsought:  
Or come I less conspicuous? Or what change  
Absents thee? Or what change detains? Come forth!

He came, and with him Eve, more loth, tho' first  
To offend; discountenanc'd both, and discompos'd; 110  
Love was not in their looks, either to God  
Or to each other; but apparent guilt,  
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,  
Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile:  
Whence Adam, fault'ring long, thus answer'd brief. 115

I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice  
Afraid, being naked, hid myself.—To whom



The gracious Judge without revile reply'd.

My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,  
But still rejoic'd: how is it now become 120  
So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who  
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree,  
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?

To whom thus Adam fore beset reply'd,  
O Heav'n! in evil strait this day I stand 125  
Before my Judge, either to undergo  
Myself the total crime or to accuse  
My other self, the partner of my life:  
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,  
I should conceal, and not expose to blame 130  
By my complaint. But strict necessity  
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint!  
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,  
However insupportable, be all  
Devolv'd. Though should I hold my peace, yet thou  
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal —  
This Woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,  
And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,  
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,  
That from her hand I could suspect no ill; 140  
And what she did, whatever in itself,  
Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;  
She gave me of the tree,——and I did eat.

To whom the Sov'reign Presence thus reply'd.  
Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey 145  
Before his voice? Or was she made thy guide,  
Superior, or but equal; that to her  
Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place  
Wherein God set thee above her, made of thee;  
And for thee; whose perfection far excell'd 150  
Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd  
She whas indeed, and lovely to attract  
Thy love; not thy subjection: and her gifts  
Were such, as under government well-seem'd;  
Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part, 155  
And



And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.

So having said, he thus to Eve in few:  
Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done?

To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelm'd,  
Confessing soon; yet not before her Judge 160  
Bold, or loquacious, thus abash'd reply'd.—  
The serpent me beguil'd, and I did eat!

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay  
To judgment He proceeded on th' accus'd  
Serpent though brute; unable to transfer 165  
The guilt on him, who made him instrument  
Of mischief, and polluted from the end  
Of his creation; justly then accurs'd,  
As vitiated in nature. More to know  
Concern'd not man, since he no further knew, 170  
Nor alter'd his offence: yet God at last  
To Satan first in sin his doom apply'd,  
Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:  
And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall.

Because thou hast done this, thou art accurst 175  
Above all cattle, each beast of the field;  
Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go;  
And dust shalt eat, all the days of thy life:  
Between thee and the woman I will put  
Enmity, and between thine and her seed: 180  
Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.

So spake this oracle, then verify'd  
When Jesus son of Mary, second Eve,  
Saw Satan fall, like lightning, down from Heav'n,  
Prince of the air: then rising from his grave 185  
Spoil'd Principalities and Pow'rs, triumph'd  
In open shew; and, with ascension bright,  
Captivity led captive through the air,  
The realm itself of Satan, long usurp'd;  
Whom He shall tread at last under our feet: 190  
Ev'n He who now foretold his fatal bruise;  
And to the woman thus his sentence turn'd.

Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply



By thy conception; children thou shalt bring  
In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will 195  
Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.

On Adam last thus judgment he pronounc'd:  
Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,  
And eaten of the tree, concerning which  
I charg'd thee, saying, thou shalt not eat thereof: 200  
Curs'd is the ground for thy sake: thou in sorrow  
Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life:  
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth  
Unbid; and thou shalt eat rh' herb of the field,  
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, 205  
Till thou return unto the ground; for thou  
Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,  
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.

So judg'd he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent;  
And th' instant stroke of Death, denunc'd that day, 210  
Remov'd far off: then, pitying how they stood  
Before him naked to the air, that now  
Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin  
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume:  
As when he wash'd his servants feet; so now 215  
As father of his family he clad  
Their nakedness with skins of beasts; or slain,  
Or, as the snake, with youthful coat repaid:  
And thought not much to clothe his enemies.  
Nor he their outward only, with the skins 220  
Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more  
Opprobrious! with his robe of righteousness  
Arraying cover'd from his Father's sight.  
To him with swift ascent he up return'd,  
Into his blissful bosom reassum'd 225  
In glory as of old; to him pleas'd  
All, tho' all-knowing, what had past with man  
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Mean while, ere thus was sinn'd and judg'd on earth,  
Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death, 230  
In counterview within the gates, that now  
Stood



Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame  
Far into Chaos, since the Fiend past through,  
Sin opening: who thus now to Death began.

O son! why sit we here each other viewing **235**  
Idly, while Satan our great author thrives  
In other worlds, and happier seat provides  
For us his offspring dear? It cannot be  
But that success attends him: if mishap,  
Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven **240**  
By his avengers, since no place like this  
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.  
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,  
Wings growing, and dominion giv'n me large  
Beyond this deep: whatever draws me on, **245**  
Or sympathy, or some connatural force,  
Pow'rful at greatest distance to unite  
With secret amity things of like kind  
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade  
Inseparable, must with me along: **250**  
For Death from Sin no pow'r can separate.  
But lest the difficulty of passing back  
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf  
Impassable, impervious; let us try  
Advent'rous work, yet to thy pow'r and mine **255**  
Not unagreeable, to found a path  
Over this main from Hell to that new world,  
Where Satan now prevails, a monument  
Of merit high to all th' infernal host;  
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse, **260**  
Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.  
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn  
By this new felt attraction and instinct.

Whom thus the meager Shadow answer'd soon.  
Go whither fate and inclination strong **265**  
Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err  
The way, thou leading, such a scent I draw  
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste  
The favor of Death from all things there that live.

Nor



Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest 270  
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.

So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell  
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock  
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,  
Against the day of battel, to a field, 275

Where armies lie incamp'd, come flying, lur'd  
With scent of living carcasses, design'd

For death the following day, in bloody fight:  
So scented the grim Feature, and upturn'd

His nostrils wide into the murky air, 280  
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.

Then both from out Hell-gates, into the waste  
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,

Flew diverse, and with pow'r, their pow'r was great,  
Hovering upon the waters, what they met 285

Solid or slimy, as in raging sea  
Toft up and down, together crowded drove

From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell:  
As when two polar winds, blowing adverse

Upon the Cronian sea, together drive 290  
Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagin'd way

Beyond Petfora eastward, to the rich  
Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil

Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,  
As with a trident smote; and fix'd as firm 295

As Delos floating once: the rest his look  
Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move:

And with Asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,  
Deep to the roots of Hell the gather'd beach

They fasten'd; and the mole immense wrought on 300  
Over the foaming deep high arch'd; a bridge,

Of length prodigious, joining to the wall  
Immoveable of this now fenceless world,

Forfeit to Death. From hence a passage broad,  
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell. 305

So, if great things to small may be compar'd,  
Xerxes, the Liberty of Grece to yoke,

From



From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,  
Came to the sea; and over Hellespont  
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd; 310  
And scourg'd with many a stroke th' indignant waves.  
Now had they brought the work, by wondrous art  
Pontifical, a ridge of pendent rock  
Over the vex'd Abyss; following the track  
Of Satan, to the self-same place where he 315  
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe  
From out of Chaos to the outside bare  
Of this round world: with pins of adamant  
And chains they made all fast; too fast they made,  
And durable: And now in little space 320  
The confines met of empyréan Heav'n  
And of this world, and on the left hand hell,  
With long reach interpos'd: three sev'ral ways  
In sight, to each of these three places led.  
And now their way to earth they had descry'd, 325  
To Paradise first tending; when, behold!  
Satan, in likeness of an Angel bright,  
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering  
His zenith, while the Sun in Aries rose:  
Disguis'd he came; but those his children dear 330  
Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.  
He, after Eve seduc'd, unminded slunk  
Into the wood fast by; and changing shape  
T' observe the sequel, saw his guileful act  
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded. 335  
Upon her husband; saw their shame, that sought  
Vain covertures: but when he saw descend  
The Son of God to judge them, terrify'd  
He fled; not hoping to escape, but shunn'd  
The present; fearing guilty what his wrath 340  
Might suddenly inflict: that past, return'd  
By night, and listening where the hapless pair  
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,  
Thence gather'd his own doom: which understood  
Not instant, but of future time, with joy 345  
And



And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return'd:  
 And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot  
 Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd  
 Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.  
 Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight 350  
 Of that stupendous bridge his joy increas'd.  
 Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair  
 Inchanting daughter, thus the silence broke.

O parent! these are thy magnific deeds,  
 Thy trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own;  
 Thou art their author, and prime architect.  
 For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,  
 My heart, which by a secret harmony  
 Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,  
 That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks  
 Now also evidence, but straight I felt,  
 Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt  
 That I must after thee with this thy son:  
 Such fatal consequence unites us three!  
 Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds; 365  
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure,  
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.  
 Thou hast atchiev'd our liberty, confin'd  
 Within Hell gates till now: Thou us impower'd  
 To fortify thus far, and over-lay 370  
 With this portentous bridge the dark Abyss.  
 Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won  
 What thy hands builded not: thy wisdom gain'd,  
 With odds what war hath lost: and fully aveng'd  
 Our foil in Heav'n: here thou shalt Monarch reign, 375  
 There didst not: there let him still victor sway,  
 As battel hath adjudg'd, from this new world  
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated:  
 And henceforth Monarchy with thee divide  
 Of all things, parted by th' empyreal bounds, 380  
 His quadrature, from thy orbicular world;  
 Or try thee now more dang'rous to his throne.

Whom thus the Prince of darkness answer'd glad.

Fair



Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both!  
High proof ye now have giv'n to be the race 385  
Of Satan, for I glory in the name,  
Antagonist of Heav'n's Almighty King,  
Amplly have merited of me, of all  
Th' infernal empire, that, so near Heav'n's door  
Triumphal with triumphal act have met, 390  
Mine with this glorious work; and made one realm  
Hell and this world, our realm, one continent  
Of easy thorough-fare. Therefore while I  
Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,  
To my associate Pow'rs, them to acquaint 395  
With these successes, and with them rejoice,  
You two this way, among these numerous Orbs,  
All yours! right down to Paradise descend:  
There dwell and reign in bliss; thence on the earth  
Dominion exercise, and in the air, 400  
Chiefly on Man, sole Lord of all declar'd:  
Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.  
My substitutes I send you, and create  
Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might  
Issuing from me: on your joint vigor now 405  
My hold of this new kingdom all depends;  
Through sin to death expos'd by my exploit.  
If your joint pow'r prevail, th' affairs of hell  
No detriment need fear; go and be strong.

So saying he dismiss'd them; they with speed 410  
Their course through thickest constellations held,  
Spreading their bane: the blasted stars look'd wan,  
And Planets, planet-struck, real Eclipse  
Then suffer'd. Th' other way, Satan went down  
The cauey to Hell gate: on either side, 415  
Disparted Chaos over built exclaim'd,  
And with rebounding surge the bars assail'd,  
That scorn'd his indignation. Through the gate,  
Wide-open and unguarded, Satan pass'd,  
And all about found desolate: for those 420  
Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,  
Flown



Flown to the upper world: the rest were all  
 Far to th' inland retir'd, about the walls  
 Of Pandaemonium, city and proud seat  
 Of Lucifer, so by allusion call'd, 425  
 Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd.  
 There kept their watch the legions, while the Grand  
 In council sat, solicitous what chance  
 Might intercept their Emperor sent: so he  
 Departing gave command, and they observ'd. 432  
 As when the Tartar from his Russian foe  
 By Astracan over the snowy plains,  
 Retires: or Bactrian Sophy from the horns  
 Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond  
 The realm of Aladule, in his retreat 435  
 To Taurus, or Casbeen: so these, the late  
 Heav'n-banish'd host, left desert utmost Hell  
 Many a dark league, reduc'd in careful watch  
 Round their Metropolis; and now expecting  
 Each hour their great adventurer from the search 440  
 Of foreign worlds: he through the midst unmark'd,  
 In shew plebeian Angel militant  
 Of lowest order, past; and from the door  
 Of that Plutonian hall, invisible  
 Ascended his high throne; which under state 445  
 Of richest texture spread, at th' upper end  
 Was plac'd in regal lustre. Down a while  
 He sat, and round about him saw unseen.  
 At last as from a cloud his fulgent head  
 And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter, clad 450  
 With what permissive glory since his fall  
 Was left him, or false glitter: all amaz'd  
 At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng  
 Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,  
 Their mighty Chief return'd: loud was th' acclame!  
 Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting Peers,  
 Rais'd from their dark Divan, and with like joy  
 Congratulant approach'd him, who with hand  
 Silence, and with these words attention won.

Thro-



Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs!  
For in possession such, not only of right, 461  
I call you and declare you now; return'd  
Successful beyond hope, to lead you forth  
Triumphant out of this infernal pit  
Abominable, accurs'd, the house of woe, 465  
And dungeon of our tyrant! now possess,  
As Lords, a spacious world, t' our native Heav'n  
Little inferior, by my adventure hard  
With peril great achiev'd. Long were to tell  
What I have done, what suffer'd, with what pain 470  
Voyag'd th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep  
Of horrible confusion! over which  
By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd  
To expedite your glorious march: but I  
Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride 475  
Th' untractable abyss, plung'd in the womb  
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild:  
That jealous of their secrets fiercely oppos'd  
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar  
Protesting fate supreme: thence, how I found 480  
The new created world, which fame in Heav'n  
Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful  
Of absolute perfection: therein Man,  
Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile  
Made happy: him by fraud I have seduc'd 485  
From his Creator; and the more t' increase  
Your wonder, with an apple: he thereat  
Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv'n up  
Both his beloved Man and all his world,  
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us, 490  
Without our hazard, labor, or alarm:  
To range in, and to dwell, and over man  
To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.  
True is, me also he hath judg'd, or rather  
Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape 495  
Man I deceiv'd, that which to me belongs,  
Is enmity, which he will put between  
P Me



Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;  
 His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head.  
 A world who would not purchase with a bruise,  
 Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account  
 Of my performance: What remains, ye Gods,  
 But up and enter now into full blifs? —

So having said, a while he stood, expecting  
 Their universal shout and high applause  
 To fill his ear; when contrary, he hears  
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues,  
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound  
 Of public scorn: he wonder'd, but not long  
 Had leisure, wond'ring at himself now more:  
 His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;  
 His arms clung to his ribs; his legs entwining  
 Each other, till supplanted down he fell  
 A monstrous serpent on his belly-prone,  
 Reluctant; but in vain, a greater pow'r  
 Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd  
 According to his doom. He would have spoke,  
 But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue,  
 To forked tongue; for now were all transform'd  
 Alike, to serpents all as accessories  
 To his bold riot: dreadful was the din  
 Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now  
 With complicated monsters head and tail,  
 Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphisbaena dire,  
 Cerastes horn'd, Hydrus, and Elops drear,  
 And Dipsas, not so thick swarm'd once the soil  
 Bedropt with blood of Gorgon; or the isle  
 Ophiusa, but still greatest he the midst,  
 Now Dragon grown, larger than whom the sun  
 Ingender'd in the Pythian vale on slime,  
 Huge Python! and his pow'r no less he seem'd  
 Above the rest still to retain: they all  
 Him follow'd, issuing forth to th' open field,  
 Where all yet left of that revolted rout,  
 Heav'n-fall'n, in station stood or just array,

Sub-



Sublime with expectation when to see  
In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief:  
They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd  
Of ugly serpents: horror on them fell,  
And horrid sympathy: for what they saw, 540  
They felt themselves now changing: down their arms,  
Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,  
And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form  
Catch'd by contagion, like in punishment,  
As in their crime. Thus was th' applause they meant,  
Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame  
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood  
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,  
His will who reigns above, to aggravate  
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that 550  
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve  
Us'd by the tempter: on that prospect strange  
Their earnest eyes they fix'd; imagining  
For one forbidden tree, a multitude  
Now ris'n, to work them further woe or shame: 555  
Yet parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,  
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain,  
But on they roll'd in heaps, and up the trees  
Climbing, fat thicker than the snaky locks  
That curl'd Megaera: greedily they pluck'd 560  
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew  
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd;  
This, more delusive, not the touch, but taste  
Deceiv'd; they fondly thinking to allay  
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit 565  
Chew'd bitter ashes, which th' offended taste  
With spattering noise rejected: oft they assay'd,  
Hunger and thirst constraining; drag'd as oft  
With hatefullest disrelish, writh'd their jaws  
With soot and cinders fill'd: so oft they fell 570  
Into the same illusion; not as man, [plagu'd  
Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they  
And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,



Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd:  
Yearly injoin'd, some say, to undergo 575  
This annual humbling certain number'd days,  
To dash their pride, and joy for man seduc'd.  
However some tradition they dispers'd  
Among the Heathen of their purchase got,  
And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd 580  
Ophion with Eurynome, the wide  
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first de rule  
Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driv'n,  
And Ops, e're yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair 585  
Too soon arriv'd, Sin, there in pow'r before,  
Once actual; now in body, and to dwell  
Habitual habitant; behind her Death,  
Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet  
On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began. 590

Second of Satan sprung, all conquering Death,  
What think'st thou of our empire now? Tho' earn'd  
With travel difficult, not better far  
Than still at Hell's dark threshold t' have sat watch,  
Unnam'd, undreaded, and thyself half starv'd? 595

Whom thus the sin-born monster answer'd soon:  
To me, who with eternal famine pine,  
Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heav'n;  
There best, where most with ravin I may meet:  
Which here, tho' plenteous, all too little seems 600  
To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corps.

To whom th' incestuous mother thus reply'd:  
Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers  
Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;  
No homely morsels! and whatever thing 605  
The scythe of Time mowes down, devour unspar'd:  
Till I in man residing, through the race,  
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect;  
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.

This said, they both betook them several ways, 610  
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make

All



All kinds; and for destruction to mature  
Sooner or later: which th' Almighty seeing,  
From his transcendent seat the Saints among,  
To those bright Orders utter'd thus his voice. 615

See with what heat these dogs of hell advance  
To waste and havock yonder world, which I  
So fair and good created; and had still  
Kept in that state, had not the folly of man  
Let in these wasteful Furies; who impute 620  
Folly to me: so doth the prince of Hell  
And his adherents, that with so much ease  
I suffer them to enter and possess

A place so heav'nly, and conniving seem  
To gratify my scornful enemies, 625  
That laugh, as if, transported with some fit  
Of passion, I to them had quitted all,  
At random yielded up to their misrule:

And know not that I call'd and drew them thither,  
My hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth 630  
Which man's polluting sin with taint hath shed  
On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst,  
With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling  
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,  
Both Sin, and Death, and yawning Grave at last 635  
Through Chaos hurl'd, obstruct the mouth of Hell  
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.

Then heav'n and earth renew'd, shall be made pure  
To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:  
Till then the curse pronounc'd on both precedes. 640

He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud  
Sung Hallelujah, as the sound of seas,  
Through multitude that sung! "Just are thy ways,  
"Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;  
"Who can extenuate Thee? next, to the Son, 645  
"Destin'd restorer of mankind, by whom  
"New heav'n and earth shall to the ages rise,  
"Or down from Heav'n descend." Such was their song,  
While the Creator calling forth by name



His mighty Angels, gave them several charge, 650  
 As sorted best with present things. The Sun  
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,  
 As might affect the earth with cold, and heat,  
 Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call  
 Decrepit Winter; from the south to bring 655  
 Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc moon  
 Her office they prescrib'd; to th' other five  
 Their planetary motions and aspects  
 In Sextile, Square, and Trine, and Opposite,  
 Of noxious efficacy; and when to join 660  
 In synod unbenign: and taught the fix'd  
 Their influence malignant when to show'r,  
 Which of them rising with the Sun, or falling,  
 Should prove tempestuous. To the winds they set  
 Their corners; when with bluster to confound 665  
 Sea, air, and shore: the thunder when to roll  
 With terror through the dark aerial hall.  
 Some say he bid his Angels turn ascanse  
 The Poles of earth twice ten degrees and more  
 From the Sun's axle; they with labor push'd 670  
 Oblique the centric globe: some say the Sun  
 Was bid turn from th' equinoctial road  
 Like distant breadth to Taurus with the sev'n  
 Atlantic sisters, and the Spartan Twins  
 Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain 675  
 By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales,  
 As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change  
 Of seasons to each clime: else had the spring  
 Perpetual smil'd on earth with vernant flowers,  
 Equal in days and nights, except to those 680  
 Beyond the Polar circles: to them day  
 Had unbenighted shone, while the low Sun  
 To recompense his distance, in their sight  
 Had rounded still th' horizon, and not known  
 Or east or west; which had forbid the snow 685  
 From cold Estotiland; and south as far  
 Beneath Magellan, At that tasted fruit

The



The sun, as from Thyésteian banquet, turn'd  
His course intended; else how had the world  
Inhabited, though sinless, more than now  
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?  
These changes in the Heav'n's, though flow, produc'd  
Like change on sea and land; sidental blast,  
Vapor, and mist, and exhalation hot;  
Corrupt, and pestilent! Now from the north  
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,  
Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice  
And snow and hail and stormy gust and flaw,  
Boreas and Caecias and Argestes loud  
And Thrascias rend the woods and seas upturn:  
With adverse blast upturns them from the south  
Notus and Afer black with thundrous clouds  
From Sierra Liona: thwart of these as fierce  
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds  
Eurus and Zephyr; with their lateral noise,  
Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began  
Outrage from lifeless things: but Discord first,  
Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational  
Death introduc'd through fierce antipathy:  
Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,  
And fish with fish: to graze the herb all leaving,  
Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe  
Of man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim  
Glar'd on him passing. These were from without  
The growing miseries which Adam saw  
Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,  
To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within,  
And in a troubled sea of passion tost,  
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint.

O miserable of happy! is this the end  
Of this new glorious world, and me so late  
The glory of that glory, who now become  
Accurs'd of blessed? Hide me from the face  
Of God, whom to behold was then my height  
Of happiness! yet well, if here would end



The misery; I deserv'd it, and would bear  
My own deservings; but this will not serve!  
All that I eat, or drink, or shall beget,  
Is propagated curse. O voice once heard  
Delightfully, *Increase and multiply*; 730  
Now death to hear! For what can I increase,  
Or multiply, but curses on my head?  
Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling  
The evil on him brought by me, will curse  
My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure! 735  
For this we may thank Adam! but his thanks  
Shall be the execration: so besides  
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me  
Shall with a fierce reflux on me redound:  
On me as on their natural centre light 740  
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys  
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!  
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay,  
To mold me man? Did I solicit thee  
From darkness to promote me, or here place 745  
In this delicious garden? As my will  
Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right  
And equal to reduce me to my dust,  
Desirous to resign and render back  
All I receiv'd; unable to perform 750  
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold  
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,  
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added  
The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable  
Thy justice seems.—Yet, to say truth, too late 755  
I thus contest: then should have been refus'd  
Those terms whatever, when they were propos'd:  
Thou didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,  
Then cavil the conditions? And though God  
Made thee without thy leave; what if thy son 760  
Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,  
Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not!  
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee  
That



That proud excuse? Yet him, not thy election,  
But natural necessity begot. 765  
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own  
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace,  
Thy punishment then justly is at his will.  
Be it so! for I submit; his doom is fair,  
That dust I am, and shall to dust return: 770  
O welcome hour whenever! Why delays  
His hand to execute, what his decree  
Fix'd on this day? Why do I overlive?  
Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out  
To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet 775  
Mortality my sentence, and be earth  
Insensible! How glad would lay me down,  
As in my mother's lap! There I should rest,  
And sleep secure: His dreadful voice no more  
Would thunder in my ears: no fear of worse 780  
To me and to my offspring would torment me  
With cruel expectation.——Yet one doubt  
Persues me still, lest all I cannot die;  
Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man  
Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish 785  
With this corporeal clod: then, in the grave,  
Or in some other dismal place, who knows  
But I shall die a living death? O thought  
Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath  
Of life that sinn'd: what dies but what had life 790  
And sin? The body properly hath neither.  
All of me then shall die; let this appease  
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.  
For though the Lord of all be infinite,  
Is his wrath also? Be it! Man is not so, 795  
But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise  
Wrath without end on man whom death must end?  
Can he make deathless death? That were to make  
Strange contradiction, which to God himself  
Impossible is held; as argument 800  
Of weakness, not of pow'r. Will he draw out,



For anger's sake, finite to infinite,  
 In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigor,  
 Satisfy'd never? That where to extend  
 His sentence beyond dust and nature's law: 805  
 By which all causes else according still  
 To the reception of their matter act,  
 Not to th' extent of their own sphere. But say  
 That Death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,  
 Bereaving sense: but endless misery 810  
 From this day onward; which I feel begun  
 Both in me, and without me, and so last  
 To perpetuity.—Ay me! That fear  
 Comes thund'ring back with dreadful revolution  
 On my defenseless head: both Death and I 815  
 Am found eternal, and incorporate both,  
 Nor I on my part single, in me all  
 Posterity stands curs'd! Fair patrimony  
 That I must leave ye, sons; O were I able  
 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none! 820  
 So disinherited, how would you bless  
 Me now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind  
 For one man's fault thus guiltless be condemn'd,  
 If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,  
 But all corrupt, both mind and will deprav'd, 825  
 No to do only, but to will the same  
 With me? How can they then acquitted stand  
 In sight of God? Him after all disputes  
 Forc'd I absolve: all my evasions vain  
 And reasonings, though thro' mazes, lead me still 830  
 But to my own conviction: first and last  
 On me, me only, as the source and spring  
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due:  
 So might the wrath. Fond wish! couldst thou support  
 That burden heavier than the earth to bear; 835  
 Than all the world much heavier; though divided  
 With that bad woman? Thus what thou desir'st  
 And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope  
 Of refuge; and concludes thee miserable,

Beyond



Beyond all past example, and future: 840  
To Satan only like both crime and doom.

O Conscience! into what abyss of fears  
And horrors hast thou driv'n me? Out of which  
I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!

Thus Adam to himself lamented loud 845  
Through the still night, not now, as ere man fell,  
Wholesome and cool, and mild; but with black air  
Accompanied; with damps and dreadful gloom;  
Which to his evil conscience represented  
All things with double terror. On the ground 850

Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground, and oft  
Curs'd his creation; Death as oft accus'd  
Of tardy execution, since denounc'd  
The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,  
Said he, with one thrice acceptable stroke 855  
To end me? shall truth fail to keep her word,  
Justice divine not hasten to be just?

But Death comes not at call, justice divine  
Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.  
O woods, o fountains, \*] hillocks, dales, and bow'rs!  
With other echo late I taught your shades  
To answer, and resound far other song! —  
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,  
Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,  
Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd: 865  
But her with stern regard he thus repell'd.

Out of my sight, thou serpent! — That name best  
Befits thee with him leagu'd; thyself as false  
And hateful: nothing wants, but that thy shape,  
Like his, and color serpentine, may show 870  
Thy inward fraud; to warn all creatures from thee  
Henceforth; lest that too heav'nly form, pretended  
To hellish falsehood, snare them! But for thee  
I had persisted happy; had not thy pride  
And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe, 875  
Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd

Not

\*] Perhaps it shou'd be, Hills, Rocks,



Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,  
Though by the Devil himself; him overweening  
To over-reach: but with the serpent meeting  
Fool'd and beguil'd, by him thou, I by thee 880  
To trust thee from my side; imagin'd wise,  
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,  
And understood not all was but a show  
Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib  
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears, 885  
More to the part sinister, from me drawn;  
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary  
To my just number found. O! why did God,  
Creator wise, that peopled highest Heav'n  
With spirits masculine, create at last 890  
This novelty on earth, this fair defect  
Of nature, and not fill the world at once  
With men as Angels without feminine,  
Or find some other way to generate  
Mankind? This mischief had not then befall'n, 895  
And more that shall befall: innumerable  
Disturbances on earth through female snares,  
And strait conjunction with this sex: for either  
He never shall find out fit mate; but such  
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake; 900  
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain  
Through her perverseness; but shall see her gain'd  
By a far worse; or if she love, withheld  
By parents; or his happiest choice too late  
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound 905  
To a fell adversary, his hate, or shame:  
Which infinite calamity shall cause  
To human life, and household peace confound.

He added not, and from her turn'd; But Eve  
Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing, 910  
And tresses all disorder'd, at his feed  
Fell humble; and embracing them, besought  
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.  
For sake me not thus, Adam! Witness Heav'n

What



What love sincere, and reverence in my heart 915  
I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,  
Unhappily deceiv'd! thy suppliant  
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,  
Whereon I live! thy gentle looks, thy aid,  
Thy counsel in this uttermost distress, 920  
My only strength and stay! Forlorn of thee,  
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?  
While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,  
Between us two let there be peace, both joining,  
As join'd in injuries, one enmity 925  
Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,  
That cruel serpent! On me exercise not  
Thy hatred for this misery befall'n:  
On me already lost! Me, than thyself  
More miserable! both have sinn'd; but thou 930  
Against God only; I against God, and thee:  
And to the place of judgment will return,  
There with my cries importune Heav'n, that all  
The sentence, from thy head remov'd, may light  
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe, 935  
Me, me only, just object of his ire!

She ended weeping; and her lowly plight  
Immoveable till peace obtain'd from fault  
Acknowledg'd, and deplor'd, in Adam wrought  
Commiseration: soon his heart relented 940  
Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,  
Now at his feet submissive in distress!  
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,  
His counsel, whom she had displeas'd, his aid!  
As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost; 945  
And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.

Unwary, and too desirous, as before,  
So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st  
The punishment all on thyself! Alas!  
Bear thine own first; ill able to sustain 950  
His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,  
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If pray'rs

Could



Could alter high decrees, I to that place  
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,  
 That on my head all might be visited, 955  
 Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiv'n,  
 To me committed and by me expos'd.

But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame  
 Each other; blam'd enough elsewhere! But strive  
 In offices of love, how we may lighten 960  
 Each other's burden, in our share of woe:  
 Since this day's death denounc'd, if ought I see,  
 Will prove no sudden but a slow-pac'd evil;  
 A long day's dying to augment our pain,  
 And to our seed, O hapless seed! deriv'd. 965

To whom thus Eve, recov'ring heart, reply'd.  
 Adam by sad experiment, I know  
 How little weight my words with thee can find,  
 Found so erroneous; thence by just event  
 Found so unfortunate; nevertheless, 970  
 Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place  
 Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain  
 Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart  
 Living or dying, from thee I will not hide  
 What thoughts in my unquiet breast are ris'n: 975  
 Tending to some relief of our extremes,  
 Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable  
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.  
 If care of our descent perplex us most,  
 Which must be born to certain woe, devour'd 980  
 By Death at last; and miserable it is  
 To be to others cause of misery,  
 Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring  
 Into this cursed world a woeful race;  
 That after wretched life must be at last 985  
 Food for so foul a monster: in thy pow'r  
 It lies, yet e're conception to prevent  
 The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.  
 Childless thou art, childless remain: so Death  
 Shall be deceiv'd his glut; and with us two 990

Be



Be forc'd to satisfy his rav'nous maw.  
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,  
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain  
From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet,  
And with desire to languish without hope,  
Before the present object languishing  
With like desire, which would be misery,  
And torment less than none of what we dread;  
Then, both ourselves and feed at once to free  
From what we fear for both, let us make short,  
Let us seek Death: or he not found, supply  
With our own hands his office on ourselves,  
Why stand we longer shivering under fears,  
That show no end but death; and have the pow'r  
Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,  
Destruction with destruction to destroy? —

She ended here, or vehement despair  
Broke off the rest: so much of death her thoughts  
Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.  
But Adam, with such counsel nothing sway'd,  
To better hopes his more attentive mind  
Lab'ring had rais'd; and thus to Eve reply'd.

Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems  
To argue in thee something more sublime,  
And excellent than what thy mind contemns.  
But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes  
That excellence thought in thee: and implies,  
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret  
For loss of life and pleasure overlov'd.  
Or if thou covet death, as utmost end  
Of misery; so thinking to evade  
The penalty pronounc'd; doubt not but God  
Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire, than so  
To be forestall'd: much more I fear lest death,  
So snatch'd will not exempt us from the pain  
We are by doom to pay. Rather such acts  
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest  
To make death in us live! Then, let us seek

Some



Some safer resolution; which methinks  
I have in view, calling to mind with heed 1030  
Part of our sentence, that "*thy seed shall bruise*  
"*The Serpent's head*:" Piteous amends! unless  
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe  
Satan: who in the Serpent hath contriv'd  
Against us this deceit: to crush his head 1035  
Would be revenge indeed, which will be lost  
By death brought on ourselves; or childless days  
Resolv'd, as thou propos'st: so, our foe  
Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd; and we  
Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040  
No more be mention'd then of violence  
Against ourselves; and wilful barrenness,  
That cuts us off from hope; and favors only  
Rancor and pride, impatience and despite,  
Reluctance against God, and his just yoke 1045  
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild  
And gracious temper he both heard and judg'd  
Without wrath, or reviling: we expected  
Immediate dissolution, which we thought  
Was meant by death that day, when lo! to thee 1050  
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,  
And bringing forth, soon recompens'd with joy,  
Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope  
Glanc'd on the ground; with labor I must earn  
My bread: what harm? Idleness had been worse: 1055  
My labor will sustain me: and lest cold  
Or heat should injure us, his timely care  
Hath unbefought provided; and his hands  
Cloth'd us unworthy; pitying while he judg'd.  
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear 1060  
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,  
And teach us further by what means to shun  
Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail and snow;  
Which now the sky with various face begins  
To shew us in this mountain; while the winds 1065  
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks  
Of



Of those fair spreading trees; which bids us seek  
Some better throwd, some better warmth to cherish  
Our limbs benumm'd; e're this diurnal star  
Leave cold the night, how we his gather'd beams 1070  
Reflected, may with matter fere foment  
Or by collision of two bodies grind  
The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds  
Jostling, or push'd with winds, rude in their shock  
Tine the flant lightning; whose thwart flame driv'n down,  
Kindles the gummy bark of Fir, and Pine,  
And sends a comfortable heat from far,  
Which might supply the Sun. Such fire to use,  
And what may else be remedy or cure  
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought, 1080  
He will instruct us praying, and of grace  
Beseeching him. So as we need not fear  
To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd  
By him with many comforts; till we end  
In dust, our final rest, and native home. 1085  
What better can we do, than to the place  
Repairing where he judg'd us, prostrate fall  
Before him reverent; and there confess  
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears  
Wat'ring the ground, and with our sighs the air 1090  
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?  
Undoubtedly he will relent and turn  
From his displeasure: in whose look serene,  
When angry most he seem'd and most severe, 1095  
What else but favor, grace, and mercy shone?

So spake our father penitent: nor Eve  
Felt less remorse. They forthwith to the place  
Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell  
Before him reverent; and both confess'd 1100  
Humbly their faults; and pardon begg'd, with tears  
Wat'ring the ground; and with their sighs the air  
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite; in sign  
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

*The End of the Tenth Book.*



## B O O K X I.

Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood  
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above,  
Prevenient grace descending, had remov'd  
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh  
Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breath'd  
Unutterable, which the spirit of pray'r  
Inspir'd, and wing'd for Heav'n with speedier flight  
Than loudest oratory. Yet their port  
Not of mean suitors; nor important less  
Seem'd their petition, than when th' ancient pair  
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,  
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore  
The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine  
Of Themis stood devout. To Heav'n their pray'rs  
Flew up, nor mis'd the way, by envious winds  
Blown vagabond, or frustrate: in they pass'd  
Dimensionless thro' heav'nly doors; then clad  
With incense, where the golden altar fum'd,  
By their great Intercessor, came in sight  
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son  
Presenting, thus to intercede began.

See, Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung  
From thy implanted grace in man! these sighs  
And pray'rs, which in this golden censer, mix'd  
With incense, I thy Priest before thee bring:  
Fruits of more pleasing favor from thy seed  
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those  
Which his own hand manuring all the trees  
Of Paradise could have produc'd, e're fall'n  
From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear  
To supplication; hear his sighs though mute!  
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me  
Interpret for him; me, his advocate  
And propitiation; all his works on me,  
Good or not good ingraft: My merit those



Shall perfect; and for these my death shall pay.  
Accept me; and in me from these receive  
The smell of peace tow'rd mankind: let him live  
Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days  
Number'd, tho' sad; till Death, his doom, which I 40  
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse,  
To better life shall yield him; where with me  
All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss;  
Made one with me, as I with thee am one.

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene. 45  
All thy request for man, accepted Son,  
Obtain; all thy request was my decree.  
But longer in that Paradise to dwell,  
The law I gave to nature him forbids.  
Those pure immortal elements, that know 50  
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,  
Eject him tainted now; and purge him off  
As a distemper, gross to air as gross,  
And mortal food, as may dispose him best  
For dissolution wrought by sin, that first 55  
Distemper'd all things; and of incorrupt  
Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts  
Created him endow'd, with happiness  
And immortality: that fondly lost,  
This other serv'd but to eternize woe, 60  
Till I provided Death: so Death becomes  
His final remedy: and after life  
Try'd in sharp tribulation, and refin'd  
By faith and faithful works, to second life,  
Wak'd in the renovation of the just, 65  
Resigns him up with heav'n and earth renew'd.  
But let Us call to synod all the Blest,  
Thro' Heav'n's wide bounds: from them I will not hide  
My judgments, how with mankind I proceed;  
As how with peccant Angels late they saw, 70  
And in their state, tho' firm, stood more confirm'd.  
He ended, and the Son gave signal high  
To the bright minister that watch'd: he blew



His trumpet, heard in Orep since perhaps  
When God descended; and perhaps once more 75  
To! sound at general doom. Th' Angelic blast  
Fill'd all the regions: from their blissful bow'rs  
Of amarantin shade, fountain or spring,  
By the waters of life, where'er they sat  
In fellowships of joy, the sons of light 80  
Hasted, resorting to the summons high,  
And took their seats: till from his throne supreme  
Th' Almighty thus pronounc'd his sov'reign will.

O Sons! like one of Us man is become  
To know both good and evil, since his taste 85  
Of that defended fruit: but let him boast  
His knowledge of good lost, and evil got:  
Happier! had it suffic'd him to have known  
Good by itself, and evil not at all.  
He sorrows now, repents and prays contrite; 90  
My motions in him: longer than they move,  
His heart I know how variable and vain  
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand  
Reach also of the Tree of Life, and eat,  
And live for ever, dream at least to live 95  
For ever, to remove him I decree,  
And send him from the garden forth, to till  
The ground whence he was taken; fitter soil.

Michael, this my behest have thou in charge!  
Take to thee from among the Cherubim 100  
Thy choice of flaming warriors; lest the Fiend,  
Or in behalf of man, or to invade  
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise.  
Haste thee! and from the Paradise of God  
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair; 105  
From hallow'd ground th' unholy; and denounce  
To them and to their progeny from thence  
Perpetual banishment. Yet lest they faint,  
At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd,  
For I behold them soften'd, and with tears 110  
Bewailing their excess, all terror hide.

If



If patiently thy bidding they obey,  
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal  
To Adam what shall come in future days,  
As I shall thee enlighten: intermix 115  
My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd:  
So send them forth, tho' sorrowing, yet in peace.  
And on the east-side of the garden place,  
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,  
Cherubic watch; and of a sword the flame 120  
Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,  
And guard all passage to the Tree of Life:  
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove  
To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey;  
With whose stol'n fruit man once more to delude. 125

He ceas'd; and th' archangelic Pow'r prepar'd  
For swift descent: with him the cohort bright  
Of watchful Cherubim: four faces each  
Had, like a double Janus; all their shape  
Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those 130  
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,  
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the past'ral reed  
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Mean while  
To resalute the world with sacred light  
Leucothea wak'd; and with fresh dews inbalm'd 135  
The earth; when Adam, and first matron Eve,  
Had ended now their orisons; and found  
Strength added from above; new hope to spring  
Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet link'd:  
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd. 140

Eve, easily may faith admit, that all  
The good which we enjoy, from Heav'n descends:  
But that from us ought should ascend to Heav'n  
So prevalent, as to concern the mind  
Of God high-blest, or to incline his will, 145  
Hard to belief may seem: yet this will pray'r,  
Or one short sigh of human breath, up-born  
Ev'n to the seat of God. For since I fought  
By pray'r th' offended Deity t' appease,



Kneel'd, and before him humbl'd all my heart, 150  
Methought I saw him placable and mild,  
Bending his ear: persuasion in me grew  
That I was heard with favor; peace return'd  
Home to my breast; and to my memory  
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe: 155  
Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now  
Assures me that the bitterness of Death  
Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee!  
Eve rightly call'd, mother of all mankind,  
Mother of all things living, since by thee 160  
Man is to live; and all things live for man!

Tho whom thus Eve, with sad demeanour meek:  
Ill worthy I such title should belong  
To me transgressor, who, for thee ordain'd  
A help, became thy snare: to me reproach 165  
Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise.  
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,  
That I, who first brought death on all, am grac'd  
The surce of life: next favourable thou,  
Who higly thus t' intitle me vouchsaf'st: 170  
Far other name deserving! But the field  
To labor calls us now with sweat impos'd,  
Though after sleepless night: for see! the morn,  
All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins  
Her rosy progress smiling: let us forth; 175  
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,  
Where'er our days work lies; though now enjoin'd  
Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,  
What can be toilsom in these pleasant walks?  
Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content! 180

So spake, so wish'd much-humbl'd Eve; but fate  
Subscrib'd not: Nature first gave signs, impress'd  
On bird, beast, air: air suddenly eclips'd  
After short blush of morn: nigh in her sight,  
The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his aery tour, 185  
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove.  
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods

First



First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,  
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind:  
Direct to th' eastern gate was bent their flight. 190  
Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chase  
Pursuing, not unmov'd, to Eve thus spake.

O Eve! some further change awaits us nigh,  
Which Heav'n by these mute signs in nature shows,  
Forerunners of his purpose: or to warn 195  
Us haply too secure of our discharge  
From penalty, because from death releas'd  
Some days: how long, and what till then our life,  
Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,  
And thither must return and be no more? 200  
Why else this double object in our sight,  
Of flight pursu'd in th' air, and o'er the ground,  
One way the self-same hour? Why in the east  
Darkness e're day's mid course, and morning light  
More orient in yon western cloud, that draws 205  
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white;

And slow descends, with something heav'nly fraught?

He err'd not; for by this the heav'nly bands  
Down from a sky of jasper lighted now  
In Paradise, and on a hill made halt: 210

A glorious apparition! had not doubt  
And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye.

Not that more glorious, when the Angels met  
Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw  
The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright: 215

Nor that which on the flaming mount appear'd  
In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,

Against the Syrian king; who to surprise  
One man, assassin like, had levied war,  
War unproclaim'd. The princely Hierarch 220

In their bright stand there left his Pow'rs, to seize  
Possession of the garden: he alone,

To find where Adam shelter'd, took his way;  
Not unperceiv'd of Adam, who to Eve,

While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake. 225



Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps  
 Of us will soon determine; or impose  
 New laws to be observ'd: for I descry,  
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill  
 One of the heav'nly host, and by his gait 230  
 None of the meanest: some great Potentate,  
 Or of the Thrones above; such majesty  
 Invests him coming! yet not terrible  
 That I should fear, nor sociably mild,  
 As Raphael, that I should much confide, 235  
 But solemn and sublime: whom not t' offend,  
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.

He ended, and th' Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,  
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man  
 Clad to meet man: over his lucid arms 240  
 A military vest of purple flow'd,  
 Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain  
 Of Sarra, worn by Kings and Heroes old  
 In time of truce: Iris had dipt the woof:  
 His starry helm unbuckl'd, shew'd him prime 245  
 In manhood, where youth ended: by his side  
 As in a glist'ring Zodiac hung the sword,  
 Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.  
 Adam bow'd low: he kingly from his state  
 Inclind not, but his coming thus declar'd. 250

Adam! Heav'n's high behest no preface needs:  
 Sufficient that thy pray'rs are heard, and Death,  
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,  
 Defeated of his seizure many days  
 Giv'n thee of grace, wherein thou may'st repent, 255  
 And one bad act with many deeds well done  
 May'st cover: well may then thy Lord, appeas'd,  
 Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim.  
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell  
 Permits not: to remove thee I am come, 260  
 And send thee from the garden forth, to till  
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.

He added not; for Adam at the news

Heart-



Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,  
That all his senses bound! Eve, who unseen 265  
Yet all had heard, with audible lament  
Discover'd soon the place of her retire.

O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death!  
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave  
Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades, 270  
Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,  
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day  
That must be mortal to us both! O flow'rs,  
That never will in other climate grow;  
My early visitation, and my last 275  
At ev'n, which I bred up with tender hand  
From the first op'ning bud, and gave you names,  
Who now shall rear you to the Sun, or rank  
Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount?  
Thee lastly, nuptial bow'r, by me adorn'd 280  
With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee  
How shall I part, and whither wander down  
Into a lower world; to this obscure  
And wild? How shall we breathe in other air  
Less pure, accusom'd to immortal fruits? 285

Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild:  
Lament not, Eve, put patiently resign  
What justly thou hast lost: nor set thy heart  
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine.  
Thy going is not lonely: with thee goes 290  
Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound:  
Where he abides, think there thy native soil.

Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp  
Recovering, and his scatter'd spirits return'd,  
To Michael thus his humble words address'd. 295

Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or nam'd  
Of them the highest; for such of shape may seem  
Prince above Princes! gently hast thou told  
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,  
And in performing end us, what besides 300  
Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,



Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,  
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet  
 Recess, and only consolation left  
 Familiar to our eyes! all places else 305  
 Inhospitable appear, and desolate;  
 Nor knowing us, nor known. And if by pray'r  
 Incessant, I could hope to change the will  
 Of him who all things can, I would not cease  
 To weary him with my assiduous cries. 310  
 But pray'r against his absolute decree  
 No more avails than breath against the wind;  
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:  
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.  
 This most afflicts me, that departing hence, 315  
 As from his face I shall be hid depriv'd  
 His blessed count'nance! Here I could frequent  
 With worship place by place where he vouchsaf'd  
 Presence divine; and to my sons relate:  
 "On this mount he appear'd; under this tree 320  
 "Stood visible; among these pines his voice  
 "I heard; here with him at this fountain talk'd."  
 So many grateful altars I would rear  
 Of grassy turf; and pile up every stone  
 Of lustre from the brook; in memory, 325  
 Or monument to ages: and thereon  
 Offer sweet smelling gums, and fruits, and flow'rs.  
 I yonder nether world where shall I seek  
 His bright appearances, or foot-step trace?  
 For though I fled him angry, yet recall'd 330  
 To life prolong'd, and promis'd race, I now  
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts  
 Of glory, and far off his steps adore.

To whom thus Michael with regard benign.  
 Adam! thou know'st Heav'n his, and all the earth, 335  
 Not this rock only. His omnipresence fills  
 Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,  
 Fomented by his virtual pow'r, and warm'd.  
 All th' earth he gave thee to possess, and rule:

No



No despicable gift! surmise not then 340  
His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd  
Of Paradise or Eden: this had been  
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread  
All generations; and had hither come  
From all the ends of th' earth, to celebrate 345  
And reverence thee their great progenitor,  
But this praeceminence thou hast lost, brought down  
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons.  
Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain  
God is as here, and will be found alike 350  
Present, and of his presence many a sign  
Still following thee, still compassing the round  
With goodness, and paternal love, his face  
Express, and of his steps the track divine.  
Which that thou may'st believe, and be confirm'd 355  
Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent  
To show thee what shall come in future days  
To thee and to thy offspring: good with bad  
Expect to hear, supernal grace contending  
With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn 360  
True patience, and to temper joy with fear  
And pious sorrow, equally inur'd  
By moderation either state to bear,  
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead  
Safest thy life, and best prepar'd indure 365  
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend  
This hill. Let Eve, for I have drench'd her eyes,  
Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st,  
As once thou slept'st, whilst she to life was form'd.  
To whom thus Adam gratefully reply'd. 370  
Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide! the path  
Thou lead'st me; and to the hand of Heav'n submit,  
However chast'ning: to the evil turn  
My obvious breast; arming to overcome  
By suffering, and earn rest from labor won: 375  
If so I may attain.—So both ascend,  
In the visions of God. It was a hill,  
Of



Of Paradise the highest; from whose top  
 The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken  
 Stretch'd out to th'amplest reach of prospect lay. 380  
 Not higher that hill nor wider looking round,  
 Whereon for different cause the tempter set  
 Our second Adam, in the wilderness;  
 To shew him all earth's kingdoms and their glory.  
 His eye might there command wherever stood 385  
 City of old or modern fame, the seat  
 Of mightiest empire: from the destin'd walls  
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Cham;  
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne;  
 To Peking, of Sinaean kings: and thence 390  
 To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul  
 Down to the golden Chersonese: or where  
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat; or since  
 In Hispahan: or, where the Russian Ksar  
 In Moscow; or the Sultan in Bizance, 395  
 Turchestan-born: nor could his eye not ken  
 \*] Th' empire of Negus, to his utmost port  
 Ercoco; and the less maritim Kings,  
 Monbaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,  
 And Sofala thought Ophir, to the realm 400  
 Of Congo, and Angola farthest south:  
 Or thence, from Niger flood to Atlas mount  
 The Kingdoms of Almanzor, Fez and Suz,  
 Marocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen:  
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway 405  
 The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw  
 Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,  
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat  
 Of Atabalipa: and yet unspoil'd  
 Guiana; whose \*\*] great city Geryon's sons 410  
 Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights,  
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,  
 Which that false fruit that promis'd clearer sight

\*] *Ethiopia.*

\*\*] *Maroa.*



Had bred; then purg'd with euphrasy and rue  
The visual nerve, for he had much to see; 415  
And from the well of life three drops instill'd.  
So deep the pow'r of these ingredients pierc'd,  
Ev'n to the inmost seat of mental sight,  
That Adam, now inforc'd to close his eyes,  
Sunk down, and all his spirits became intranc'd: 420  
But him the gentle Angel by the hand  
Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd.

Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold  
Th' effects which thy original crime hath wrought  
In some to spring from thee; who never touch'd 425  
Th' excepted tree; nor with the snake conspir'd;  
Nor sinn'd thy sin: yet from that sin derive  
Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.

His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field,  
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430  
New reap'd: the other part, sheep-walks and folds:  
I' th' midst an altar as the land-mark stood,  
Rustic, of grassy sod: thither anon  
A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought  
First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf, 435  
Uncull'd, as came to hand. A shepherd next  
More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,  
Choicest and best: then sacrificing, laid  
The inwards and their fat, with incense strow'd,  
On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd. 440  
His offering soon propitious fire from Heav'n  
Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steam.  
The other's not, for his was not sincere.  
Whereat he inly rag'd, and as they talk'd  
Smote him into the midriff with a stone, 445  
That beat ut life: he fell, and deadly pale  
Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effus'd!  
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart  
Dismay'd, and thus in haste to th' Angel cry'd.

O Teacher! some great mischief hath befall'n 450  
To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd:

Is



Is piety thus, and pure devotion paid?

T' whom Michael thus, he also mov'd, reply'd:  
These two are brethren, Adam, and to come  
Out of thy loins: th' unjust the just hath slain; 455  
For envy, that his brother's offering found  
From Heav'n acceptance: but the bloody fact  
Will be aveng'd; and th' other's faith approv'd  
Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,  
Rolling in dust and gore. To which our sire. 460

Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!  
But have I now seen Death? is this the way  
I must return to native dust? O sight  
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,  
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel! 465

To whom thus Michaël. Death thou hast seen  
In his first shape on man: but many shapes  
Of Death, and many are the ways that lead  
To his grim cave: all dismal! yet to sense  
More terrible at th' entrance than within. 470  
Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die:  
By fire, flood, famine: by intemperance more  
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring  
Diseases dire: of which a monstrous crew  
Before thee shall appear; that thou may'st know 475  
What misery th' inabstinence of Eve  
Shall bring on men. Immediately a place  
Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark,  
A lazarus-house it seem'd; wherein were laid  
Numbers of all diseas'd: all maladies 480  
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms  
Of heart-sick agony, all fev'rous kinds,  
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,  
Intestin stone, and ulcer, cholic pangs,  
Daemoniac phrenzy, moaping melancholy, 485  
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,  
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,  
Dropries, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.  
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans! Despair

Ten-



Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch: 490  
And over them triumphant Death his dart  
Shook; but delay'd to strike, though oft invoc'd  
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.  
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long  
Dry-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept, 495  
Though not of woman born; compassion quell'd  
His best of man, and gave him up to tears  
A space; till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess,  
And scarce recovering words his plaint renew'd.

O miserable mankind! to what fall 500  
Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd!  
Better end here unborn! Why is life giv'n  
To be thus wrested from us? rather, why  
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew  
What we receive, would either not accept 505  
Life offer'd; or soon beg to lay it down;  
Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus  
Th' image of God in man, created once  
So goodly and erect, though faulty since  
To such unsightly sufferings be debas'd, 510  
Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,  
Retaining still divine similitude  
In part, from such deformities be free,  
And for his Maker's image fake exempt?

Their Maker's image, answer'd Michael, then 515  
Forsook them, when themselves they vilify'd  
To serve ungovern'd appetite: and took  
His image whom they serv'd, a brutish vice,  
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve:  
Therefore so abject is their punishment, 520  
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own:  
Or if his likeness, by themselves defac'd,  
While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules  
To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they  
God's image did not reverence in themselves. 525

I yield it just, said Adam, and submit!  
But is there yet no other way, besides

These



These painful passages, how we may come  
To death, and mix with our connatural dust?

There is, said Michael, if thou well observe 530  
The rule not of too much; by temperance taught  
In what thou eat'st and drink'st; seeking from thence  
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,  
Till many years over thy head return:  
So mayst thou live; till like ripe fruit thou drop 535  
Into thy mother's lap: or be with ease  
Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd, for death mature.  
This is old age: but then, thou must outlive  
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty; which will change  
To wither'd, weak, and gray: thy senses then 540  
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgo,  
To what thou hast; and for the air of youth,  
Hopeful, and chearful, in thy blood will reign  
A melancholy damp of cold and dry  
To weigh thy spirits down; and last consume 545  
The balm of life. To whom our ancestor.

Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong  
Life much: bent rather how I may be quit  
Fairest and easiest of this cumbrous charge,  
Which I must keep till my appointed day 550  
Of rendring up, patiently attend  
My dissolution! Michaël reply'd.

Nor love thy life, nor hate: but what thou liv'st  
Live well: how long, or short, permit to Heav'n.  
And now prepare thee for another fight. 555

He look'd, and saw a spacious plain, whereon  
Were tents of various hue: by some, were herds  
Of cattle grazing: others, whence the sound  
Of instruments, that made melodious chime,  
Was heard, of harp, and organ, and who mov'd 560  
Their stops and chords was seen: his volant touch  
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,  
Fled and persu'd transverse the resonant fugue.  
In other part stood one who at the forge  
Lab'ring, two massy clods of iron and brass 565

Had



Had melted, whether found where casual fire  
Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,  
Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot  
To some cave's mouth, or whether wash'd by stream  
From underground, the liquid ore he drain'd 570  
Into fit molds prepar'd, from which he form'd  
First his own tools, then, what might else be wrought  
Fusil or grav'n in metal. After these,  
But on the hither side, a different sort  
From the high neighb'ring hills, which was their seat, 575  
Down to the plain descended: by their guise  
Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent  
To worship God aright, and know his works  
Not hid; nor those things last, which might preserve  
Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain 580  
Long had not walk'd, when from the tents behold  
A bevy of fair women, richly gay  
In gems and wanton dress; tho' th' harp they sung  
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:  
The men, tho' grave, ey'd them, and let their eyes 585  
Rove without rein, till in the amorous net  
Fast caught, they lik'd, and each his liking chose:  
And now of love they treat, till th' ev'ning star  
Love's harbinger, appear'd: then all in heat  
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590  
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invok'd:  
With feast and music all the tents resound.  
Such happy interview, and fair event  
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flow'rs,  
And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart 595  
Of Adam, soon inclin'd t' admit delight,  
The bent of Nature! which he thus express'd.

True opener of mine eyes, prime angel blest!  
Much better seems this vision, and more hope  
Of peaceful days portends, than those two past: 600  
Those were of hate, and death, or pain much worse:  
Here Nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.

To whom thus Michael. Judge not what is best

R

By



By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,  
Created, as thou art, to nobler end 605  
Holy and pure, conformity divine!

Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents  
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race  
Who slew his brother: studious they appear  
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare; 610

Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit  
Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledg'd none  
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget:

For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd  
Of Goddeses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay, 615  
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists

Woman's domestic honor and chief praise,  
Bred only and completed to the taste

Of lustful appetite; to sing, to dance,  
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye. 620

To these, that sober race of men, whose lives  
Religious titled them the sons of God,

Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame  
Ignobly! to the trins and to the smiles

Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy, 625  
Erelong to swim at large, and laugh: for which

The world ere long a world of tears must weep!  
To whom thus Adam of short joy bereft.

O pity and shame! that they, who to live well  
Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread 630

Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!  
But still I see the tenor of man's woe

Hold on the same, from woman to begin.  
From man's effeminate slackness it begins,

Said th' Angel, who should better hold his place  
By wisdom and superior gifts receiv'd.

But now prepare thee for another scene.  
He look'd, and saw wide territory spread

Before him, towns and rural works between:  
Cities of men with lofty gates and tow'rs; 640

Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war;  
Giants



Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise!  
Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed:  
Single or in array of battle rang'd  
Both horse and food; nor idly must'ring stood: 645  
One way a band select from forage drives  
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine  
From a fat meadow-ground; or fleecy flock,  
Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain;  
Their booty: scarce with life the shepherds fly, 650  
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray.  
With cruel tournament the squadrons join!  
Where cattle pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies  
With carcasses, and arms th' insanguin'd field,  
Deserted. Others, to a city strong 655  
Lay siege, incamp'd; by batt'ry, scale, and mine  
Assaulting: others from the wall defend  
With dart and jav'lin, stones and sulph'rous fire:  
On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.  
In other part, the sceptred Heralds call 660  
To council in the city gates: anon  
Grey-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,  
Assemble, and harangues are heard: but soon  
In factious opposition: till at last  
Of middle age one rising, eminent  
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,  
Of justice, of religion, truth and peace,  
And judgment from above. Him old and young  
Exploded, and had seiz'd with violent hands;  
Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence, 670  
Unseen amid the throng. So violence  
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law  
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.  
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide  
Lamenting turn'd full sad: O what are these! 675  
Death's minister's, not men! who thus deal death  
Inhumanly to men, and multiply  
Ten thousand fold the sin of him who slew  
His brother: for of whom such massacre



Make they but of their brethren; men of men? 680  
But who was that just man, whom had not Heav'n  
Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?

To whom thus Michael. These are the product  
Of those ill-match'd marriages thou saw'st;  
Where good with bad were match'd; who of themselves  
Abhor to join: and by imprudence mix'd,  
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.  
Such were these giants; men of high renown!  
For in those days might only shall be admir'd,  
And valor and heroic virtue call'd: 690  
To overcome in battel, and subdue  
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite  
Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch  
Of human glory; and for glory done  
Of triumph, to be styl'd great conquerors, 695  
Patrons of mankind, Gods, and sons of Gods,  
Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.  
Thus fame shall be atchiev'd, renown on earth;  
And what most merits fame in silence hid.

But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldst  
The only righteous in a world perverse,  
And therefore hated, therefore so beset  
With foes, for daring single to be just,  
And utter odious truth, that God would come  
To judge them with his Saints: him the Most High 705  
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds,  
Did, as thou saw'st, receive; to walk with God  
High in salvation, and the climes of bliss,  
Exempt from death: to shew thee what reward  
Awaits the good; the rest, what punishment: 710  
Which now direct thine eyes, and soon behold.

He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd:  
The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar;  
All noww turn'd to jollity, and game,  
To luxury and riot, feast and dance; 715  
Marrying or prostituting, as beset,  
Rape or adultery, where passing fair

Allur'd



Allur'd them: thence from cups, to civil broils.  
At length a reverend fire among them came,  
And of their doings great dislike declar'd, 720  
And testify'd against their ways: he oft  
Frequented their assemblies, where so met,  
Triumphs or festivals and to them preach'd  
Conversion and repentance: as to souls  
In prison under judgments imminent: 725  
But all in vain! which when he saw, he ceas'd  
Contending, and remov'd his tents far off.  
Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,  
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;  
Measur'd by cubit, length and breadth and height; 730  
Smear'd round with pitch; and in the side a door  
Contriv'd; and of provisions laid in large,  
For man and beast: when lo, o wonder strange!  
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small  
Came sevens, and pairs, and enter'd in, as taught 735  
Their order: last the fire, and his three sons  
With their four wives; and God made fast the door.  
Meanwhile the southwind rose, and with black wings  
Wide-hov'ring, all the clouds together drove  
From under Heav'n; the hills to their supply 740  
Vapor, and exhalation dusk and moist,  
Sent up amain: and now the thicken'd sky  
Like a dark ceiling stood: down rush'd the rain  
Impetuous: and continu'd till the earth  
No more was seen: the floating vessel swum 745  
Uplifted; and secure with beaked prow  
Rode tilting o'er the waves: all dwellings else  
Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp  
Deep under water roll'd: sea cover'd sea;  
Sea without shore! and in their palaces 750  
Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd  
And stabled: of mankind, so numerous late,  
All left, in one small bottom swum imbark'd.  
How dost thou grieve then, Adam, to behold  
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad, 755



Depopulation! Thee another flood,  
Of tears and sorrow a flood thee also drown'd,  
And sunk thee as thy sons: till gently rear'd  
By th' Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,  
Tho' comfortless; as when a father mourns 760  
His children, all in view destroy'd at once:  
And scarce to th' Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint.

O visions ill foreseen! Better had I  
Liv'd ignorant of future, so had born  
My part of evil only, each day's lot 765  
Enough to bear: those now, that were dispens'd  
The burden of many ages, on me light  
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth  
Abortive, to torment me ere their being,  
With thought that they must be. Let no men seek 770  
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall  
Him or his children: evil he may be sure:  
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;  
And he the future evil shall no less  
In apprehension than in substance feel; 775  
Grievous to bear! But that care now is past,  
Man is not whom to warn: those few escap'd  
Famine and anguish will at last consume  
Wand'ring that watry desert. I had hope  
When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth, 780  
All would have then gone well, peace would have crown'd  
With length of happy days the race of man.  
But I was far deceiv'd! For now I see  
Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.  
How comes it thus? Unfold, celestial guide! 785  
And whether here the race of man will end.

To whom thus Michael. Those whom last thou saw'st  
In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they  
First seen in acts of prowess eminent  
And great exploits; but of true virtue void: 790  
Who having spilt much blood, and done much waste,  
Subduing nations; and achiev'd thereby  
Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey;  
Shall



Shall change their course to pleasure, ease and sloth,  
Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness and pride 795  
Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.  
The conquer'd also, and enslav'd by war,  
Shall with their freedom lost all virtue lose  
And fear of God; from whom their piety feign'd  
In sharp contest of battel found no aid 800  
Against invaders: therefore cool'd in zeal,  
Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,  
Worldly or dissolute, on what their Lords  
Shall leave them to enjoy: for th' earth shall bear  
More than enough, that temperance may be try'd: 805  
So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd;  
Justice and temperance, truth and faith forgot!  
One man except, the only son of light  
In a dark age, against example good,  
Against allurement, custom, and a world 810  
Offended, fearless of reproach and scorn,  
Or violence; he of their wicked ways  
Shall them admonish; and before them set  
The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,  
And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come 815  
On their impenitence; and shall return  
Of them derided. But, of God observ'd,  
The one just man alive, by his command  
Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheldst,  
To save himself and household, from amidst 820  
A world devote to universal wrack.  
No sooner he with them of man and beast  
Select for life shall in the ark be lodg'd,  
And shelter'd round, but all the cataracts  
Of Heav'n set open on the earth shall pour 825  
Rain day and night: all fountains of the deep  
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp  
Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise  
Above the highest hills. Then shall this mount  
Of Paradise, by might of waves be mov'd 830  
Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,



With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,  
Down the great river to the opening gulf,  
And there take root an island salt and bare,  
The haunt of Seals, and Orcs, and Sea-mews clang; 835  
To teach thee that God attributes to place  
No sanctity, if none be thither brought  
By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.  
And now what further shall ensue, behold.

He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood, 840  
Which now abated: for the clouds were fled,  
Driv'n by a keen north-wind, that blowing dry  
Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decay'd;  
And the clear sun on his wide watry glass  
Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew, 845  
As after thirst: which made their flowing shrink  
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole  
With soft foot tow'rd's the deep, who now had stopt  
His sluices, as the Heav'n his windows shut.  
The Ark no more now flotes, but seems on ground 850  
Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.  
And now the tops of hills as rocks appear:  
With clamor thence the rapid currents drive,  
Tow'rd's the retreating sea their furious tide.  
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies, 855  
And after him, the surer messenger,  
A dove sent forth once and again to spy  
Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light:  
The second time returning, in his bill  
An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign! 860  
Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark  
The ancient fire descends with all his train:  
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,  
Grateful to Heav'n, over his head beholds  
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow 865  
Conspicuous with three list'd colors gay,  
Betokening peace from God, and cov'nant new.  
Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,  
Greatly rejoyc'd, and thus his joy broke forth.

O thou



O thou who future things canst represent 870  
As present, heav'nly instructor! I revive  
At this last sight, assur'd that man shall live  
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.  
Far less I now lament for one whole world  
Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice 875  
For one man found so perfect and so just,  
That God vouchsafes to raise another world  
From him, and all his anger to forget.  
But say, what mean those color'd streaks in heav'n  
Distended as the brow of God appeas'd, 880  
Or serve they as a flow'ry verge to bind  
The fluid skirts of that same watry cloud,  
Lest it again dissolve and show'r the earth?

To whom th' Arch-Angel. Dextrously thou aim'st;  
So willingly doth God remit his ire, 885  
Though late repenting him of man deprav'd;  
Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he saw  
The whole earth fill'd with violence; and all flesh  
Corrupting each their way: yet, those remov'd,  
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight, 890  
That he relents, not to blot out mankind,  
And makes a covenant never to destroy  
The earth again by flood; nor let the sea  
Surpass his bounds; nor rain to drown the world,  
With man therein or beast: but when he brings 895  
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set  
His triple-color'd bow, whereon to look,  
And call to mind his covenant: day and night,  
Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost  
Shall hold their course; till fire purge all things new,  
Both Heav'n and Earth wherein the just shall dwell.

*The End of the Eleventh Book.*



## B O O K XII.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,  
 Tho' bent on speed: so here th' Arch-Angel paus'd,  
 Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,  
 If Adam ought perhaps might interpose:  
 Then with transition sweet new speech resumes. 5

Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end,  
 And man as from a second stock proceed.

Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive  
 Thy mortal sight to fail: objects divine  
 Must needs impair and weary human sense. 10

Henceforth what is to come I will relate,  
 Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.

This second source of men, while yet but few,  
 And while the dread of judgment past remains  
 Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity, 15

With some regard to what is just and right  
 Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;

Lab'ring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,  
 Corn, wine and oil: and from the herd, or flock,  
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20

With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,  
 Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd and dwell

Long time in peace by families and tribes

Under paternal rule: till one shall rise

Of proud ambitious heart; who not content 25

With fair equality, fraternal state;

Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd

Over his brethren, and quite dispossess

Concord and law of nature from the earth;

Hunting, and men, not beasts, shall be his game, 30

With war and hostile snare such as refuse

Subjection to his empire tyrannous.

A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd

Before the Lord; as in despite of Heav'n,

Or



Or from Heav'n claiming second sov'reignty: 35  
And from rebellion shall derive his name;  
Though of rebellion others he accuse.  
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins  
With him or under him to tyrannize,  
Marching from Eden tow'rd's the west, shall find 40  
The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge  
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell.  
Of brick, and of that stuff they cast to build  
A city and tow'r, whose top may reach to Heav'n;  
And get themselves a name: lest far dispers'd 45  
In foreign lands their memory be lost;  
Regardless wether good or evil fame.  
But God, who oft descends to visit men  
Unseen, and through their habitations walks  
To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50  
Comes down to see their city, ere the tow'r  
Obstruct Heav'n-tow'rs; and in derision sets  
Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase  
Quite out their native language: and instead  
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown. 55  
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud  
Among the builders: each to other calls  
Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage,  
As mock'd they storm: great laughter was in Heav'n,  
And looking down, to see the hubbub strage, 60  
And hear the din: thus was the building left  
Ridiculous; and the work Confusion nam'd.

Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd,  
O execrable son! so to aspire  
Above his brethren; to himself assuming 65  
Authority usurp'd, from God not giv'n.  
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,  
Dominion absolute; that right we hold  
By his donation: but man over men  
He made not Lord: such title to himself 70  
Reserving, human left from human free,  
But this usurper his encroachment proud,

Stays



Stays not on man: to God his tow'r intends  
Siege and defiance. Wretched man! What food  
Will he convey up thither to sustain 75  
Himself and his rash army; where thin air  
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross;  
And famish him of breath, if not of bread?  
To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr'st  
That son, who on the quiet state of men 80  
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue  
Rational liberty: yet know withal,  
Since by original lapse, true liberty  
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells 85  
Twin'd, and from her hath no dividual being:  
Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,  
Immediately inordinate desires  
And upstart passions catch the government  
From reason; and to servitude reduce 90  
Man till then free. Therefore, since he permits  
Within himself unworthy pow'rs to reign  
Over free reason; God in judgment just  
Subjects him from without to violent lords:  
Who oft as undeservedly inthrall 95  
His outward freedom. Tyranny must be;  
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.  
Yet sometimes nations will decline so low  
From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,  
But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd, 100  
Deprives them of their outward liberty;  
Their inward lost: witness th' irreverent son  
Of him who built the Ark; who for the shame  
Done to his father, heard his heavy curse,  
"Servant of Servants," on his vicious race.  
Thus will this latter, as the former world, 105  
Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last  
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw  
His presence from among them, and avert  
His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth  
To leave them to their own polluted ways: 110  
And



And one peculiar nation to select  
From all the rest, of whom to be invok'd,  
A nation from one faithful man to spring:  
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,  
Bred up in idol-worship. O that men,  
Canst thou believe? should be so stupid grown,  
While yet the Patriarch liv'd, who scap'd the flood,  
As to forsake the living God, and fall  
To worship their own work in wood and stone  
For Gods! yet him God the most High vouchsafes  
To call by vision from his father's house,  
His kindred and false Gods, into a land  
Which he will shew him: and from him will raise  
A mighty nation; and upon him show'r  
His benediction so, that in his seed  
All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys,  
Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.  
I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith  
He leaves his Gods, his friends, and native soil  
Ur of Chaldaea, passing now the ford  
To Haran: after him a cumbrous train  
Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude:  
Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth  
With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.  
Canaan he now attains; I see his tents  
Pitch'd about Sichem, and the neighb'ring plain  
Of Moreh. There by promise he receives  
Gift to his progeny of all that land;  
From Hamath northward to the desert south;  
Things by their names I call, tho' yet unnam'd,  
From Hermon east, to the great western sea;  
Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold  
In prospect, as I point them, on the shore  
Mount Carmel; here the double-founted stream,  
Jordan, true limit eastward: but his sons  
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.  
This ponder, that all nations of the earth  
Shall in his seed be blessed: by that seed



Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise  
The serpent's head; whereof to thee anon 150  
Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This Patriarch blest,  
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,  
A son, and of his son a grand-child leaves;  
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown.  
The grand-child with twelve sons increas'd departs 155  
From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd  
Egypt, divided by the river Nile:  
Seere where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths  
Into the sea! To sojourn in that land  
He comes, invited by a younger son 160  
In time of dearth; a son whose worthy deeds  
Raise him to be the second in that realm  
Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race  
Growing into a nation: and now grown,  
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks 165  
To stop their over-growth, as inmate guests  
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves  
Inhospitably; and kills their infant males:  
Till by two brethren, those two brethren call  
Moses and Aaron, sent from God to claim 170  
His people from inthralment, they return  
With glory and spoil back to their promis'd land.  
But first the lawless tyrant who denies  
Tho know their God, or message to regard,  
Must be compell'd by sings and judgment dire: 175  
To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;  
Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill  
With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land:  
His cattle must of rot and murren die;  
Botches and blains must all his flesh imboss, 180  
And all his people: thunder mix'd with hail,  
Hail mix'd with fire, must rend th' Egyptian sky,  
And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls  
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,  
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down 185  
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green:

Dark-



Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,  
Palpable darkness! and blot out three days:  
Last, with one midnight stroke, all the first-born  
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds 190  
The river dragon tam'd at length submits  
To let his sojourners depart; and oft  
Humbles his stubborn heart; but still as ice  
More harden'd after thaw: till in his rage  
Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea 195  
Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass  
As on dry land between two chrystal walls;  
Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand  
Divided, till his rescu'd gain their shore:  
Such wondrous pow'r God to his saint will lend, 200  
Through present in his Angel, who shall go  
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire,  
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire;  
To guide them in their journey, and remove  
Behind them, while th' obdurate king pursues. 205  
All night he will pursue, put his approach  
Darkness defends between till morning watch:  
Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud  
God looking forth will trouble all his host,  
And craze their chariot-wheels: when by command 210  
Moses once more his potent rod extends  
Over the sea, the sea his rod obeys:  
On their imbattled ranks the waves return,  
And overwhelm their war! The race elect,  
Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance 215  
Through the wild desert; not the readiest way,  
Lest entring on the Canaanite alarm'd  
War terrify them inexpert, and fear  
Return them back to Aegypt, chusing rather  
Inglorious life with servitude: for life, 220  
To noble and ignoble is more sweet  
Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on.  
This also shall they gain by their delay  
In the wide wilderness: there they shall found  
Their



Their government, and their great senate choose 225  
Thro' the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd.  
God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top  
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself  
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets found  
Ordain them laws: part such as appertain 230  
To civil justice: part religious rites  
Of sacrifice: informing them by types,  
And shadows, of that destin'd seed to bruise  
The serpent, by what means he shall atchieve  
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God 235  
To mortal ear is dreadful! They beseech  
That Moses might report to them his will,  
And terror cease: He grants what they besought  
Instructed that to God is no access  
Without mediator, whose high office now 240  
Moses in figure bears, to introduce  
One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,  
And all the prophets in their age the times  
Of Great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites  
Establish'd, such delight hath God in men 245  
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes  
Among them to set up his tabernacle:  
The holy One with mortal men to dwell.  
By his prescript a Sanctuary is fram'd  
Of cedar, overlaid with gold, therein 250  
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,  
The records of his cov'nant; over these  
A mercy-seat of gold between the wings  
Of two bright Cherubim: before him burn  
Seven lamps as in a zodiac representing 255  
The heav'nly fires: over the tent a cloud  
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,  
Save when they journey: and at length they come,  
Conducted by his Angel to the land  
Promis'd to Abraham and his seed—— The rest 260  
Were long to tell, how many battles fought,  
How many Kings destroy'd, and kingdoms won,

Or



Or how the Sun shall in mid Heav'n stand still  
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,  
Man's voice commanding, "Sun in Gibeon stand, 265  
"And thou moon in the vale of Ajalon,  
"Till Israel overcome;" so call the third  
From Abraham, son of Isaac, from him  
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.

Here Adam interpos'd. O sent from Heav'n,  
Inlightner of my darkness! gracious things 267  
Thou hast reveal'd; those chiefly which concern  
Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find  
Mine eyes true op'ning, and my heart much eas'd;  
Erewhile perplex'd with thoughts what would become  
Of me and all mankind: but now I see  
His day, in whom all nations shall be blest:  
Favor unmerited by me, who sought  
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.

This yet I apprehend not, why to those 280  
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth,  
So many and so various laws are giv'n:  
So many laws argue so many sins  
Among them: how can God with such reside?

To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that sin 285  
Will reign among them, as of thee begot:  
And therefore was law giv'n them to evince  
Their natural pravity, by stirring up  
Sin against law to fight: that when they see  
Law can discover sin, but not remove, 290  
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,  
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude  
Some blood more precious must be paid for man;  
Just for unjust: that in such righteousness  
To them by faith imputed, they may find 295  
Justification towards God, and peace  
Of conscience; which the law by ceremonies  
Cannot appease; nor man the moral part  
Perform: and not performing, cannot live.  
So law appears imperfect, and but giv'n



With purpose to resign them in full time  
 Up to a better cov'nant; disciplin'd  
 From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit;  
 From imposition of strict laws, to free  
 Acceptance of large grace; from servil fear  
 To filial; works of law, to works of faith.  
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God  
 Highly belov'd, being but the minister  
 Of law, his people into Canaan lead;  
 But Joshua: whom the Gentiles Jesus call;  
 His name and office bearing, who shall quell  
 The adversary serpent; and bring back  
 Through the world's wilderness long wander'd man  
 Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.  
 Mean while they, in their earthly Canaan plac'd  
 Long time shall dwell and prosper: but when sins  
 National interrupt their public peace,  
 Provoking God to raise them enemies,  
 From whom as oft he saves them penitent;  
 By Judges first, then under Kings: of whom  
 The second, both for piety renown'd  
 And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive  
 Irrevocable, that his regal throne  
 For ever shall indure: the like shall sing  
 All prophecy, that of the royal stock  
 Of David, so I name this king, shall rise  
 A son, the woman's seed to thee foretold:  
 Foretold to Abraham; as in whom shall trust  
 All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings  
 The last; for of his reign shall be no end.  
 But first a long succession must ensue,  
 And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,  
 The clouded Ark of God, till then in tents  
 Wand'ring, shall in a glorious Temple inshrine.  
 Such follow him as shall be register'd  
 Part good part bad; of bad the longer scroll:  
 Whose foul idolatries, and other faults

Heap'd



Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense  
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,  
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark,  
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey  
To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st  
Left in confusion; Babylon thence call'd.  
There in captivity he lets them dwell  
The space of seventy years: then brings them back,  
Remembering mercy, and his cov'nant sworn  
To David, stablish'd as the days of heav'n.  
Return'd from Babylon, by leave of kings  
Their lords, whom God dispos'd, the House of God  
They first re-edify: and for a while  
In mean estate live moderate: till grown  
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;  
But first, among the priests dissention springs;  
Men who attend the altar, and should most  
Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings  
Upon the Temple itself: at last they seize  
The sceptre, and regard not David's sons:  
Then lose it to a stranger, that the true  
Anointed king Messiah might be born  
Barr'd of his right: yet at his birth a star  
Unseen before in heav'n proclaims him come,  
And guides the eastern Sages, who inquire  
His place, to offer incense, myrrh and gold:  
His place of birth a solemn Angel tells  
To simple shepherds keeping watch by night:  
They gladly thither haste, and by a choir  
Of squadron'd Angels hear his carol sung.  
A Virgin is his mother, but his fire  
The pow'r of the most High! He shall ascend  
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign  
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the heav'ns.

He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy  
Surcharg'd, as had, like grief, been dew'd in tears,  
Without the vent of words; which these he breath'd.



O prophet of glad tidings! finisher 375  
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand,  
What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain:  
Why our great expectation should be call'd  
The seed of woman: Virgin Mother, hail!  
High in the love of Heav'n! Yet from my loins 380  
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son  
Of God most High; so God with Man unites.  
Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise  
Expect with mortal pain: say, where and when  
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel? 385  
To whom thus Michael. Dream not of their fight,  
As of a duel, or the local wounds  
Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son  
Manhood to God-head, with more strength to foil  
Thy enemy: nor so is overcome 390  
Satan, whose fall from Heav'n, a deadlier bruise!  
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:  
Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,  
Not by destroying Satan, but his works,  
In thee and in thy seed. Nor can this be, 395  
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,  
Obedience to the law of God, impos'd  
On penalty of death, and suffering death,  
The penalty to thy transgression due;  
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow: 400  
So only can high Justice rest appaid.  
The law of God exact he shall fulfil  
Both by obedience and by love: though love  
Alone fulfil the law: thy punishment  
He shall indure, by coming in the flesh 405  
To a reproachful life, and cursed death:  
Proclaiming life to all who shall believe  
In his redemption; and that his obedience  
Imputed, becomes theirs by faith; his merits  
To save them, not their own, tho' legal works. 410  
For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd

Seis'd



Seis'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd,  
A shameful and accurs'd! nail'd to the cross  
By his own nation; slain for bringing life.  
But to the cross he nails thy enemies, 415  
The law that is against thee, and the sins  
Of all mankind, with him there crucify'd,  
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust  
In this his satisfaction. So he dies,  
But soon revives; death over him no pow'r 420  
Shall long usurp: e're the third dawning light  
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise  
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,  
The ransom paid, which man from death redeems,  
His death for man, as many as offer'd life 425  
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace  
By faith not void of works. This Gold-like act  
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have dy'd,  
In sin for ever lost from life: this act  
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength, 430  
Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,  
And fix far deeper in his head their stings  
Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,  
Or theirs whom he redeems: a death like sleep,  
A gentle wafting to immortal life. 435  
Nor after resurrection shall he stay  
Longer on earth than certain times t' appear  
To his disciples; men who in his life  
Still follow'd him: to them shall leave in charge  
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd 440  
And his salvation; them who shall believe  
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign  
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life  
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,  
For death, like that which the Redeemer dy'd. 445  
All nations they shall teach: for from that day,  
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins  
Salvation shall be preach'd; but to the sons



Of Abraham's faith wherever thro' the world:  
 So in his seed all nations shall be blest. 450  
 Then to the heav'n of heav'ns shall he ascend  
 With victory, triumphing through the air  
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise  
 The serpent, Prince of air, and drag in chains  
 Thro' all his realm, and there confounded leave: 455  
 Then enter into glory, and resume  
 His seat at God's right hand, exalted high  
 Above all names in Heav'n: and thence shall come,  
 When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,  
 With glory and pow'r to judge both quick and dead:  
 To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward  
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss;  
 Whether in heav'n or earth: for then the earth  
 Shall all be Paradise, far happier place  
 Than this of Eden, and far happier days. 465

So spake th' Arch-Angel Michaël, then paus'd,  
 As at the world's great period: and our sire,  
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus reply'd.

O goodness infinite! goodness immense!  
 That all this good of evil shall produce, 470  
 And evil turn to good! more wonderful  
 Than that which by creation first brought forth  
 Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,  
 Whether I should repent me now of sin  
 By me done and occasion'd; or rejoice 475  
 Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring  
 To God more glory, more good-will to men  
 From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.  
 But say, if our Deliverer up to Heav'n  
 Must reascend, what will betide the few 480  
 His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,  
 The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide  
 His people, who defend? will they not deal  
 Worse with his followers, than with him they dealt?  
 Be sure they will, said th' Angel; but from Heav'n  
 He



He to his own a Comforter will send,  
The promise of the Father: Who shall dwell  
His Spirit within them; and the law of faith  
Working thro' love, upon their hearts shall write,  
To guide them in all truth; and also arm 490  
With spiritual armour, able to resist  
Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts:  
What man can do against them, not afraid,  
Though to the death; against such cruelties  
With inward consolations recompens'd; 495  
And oft supported so as shall amaze  
Their proudest persecutors: for the Spirit  
Pour'd first on his Apostles, whom he sends  
To evangelize the Nations; then on all  
Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts indue 500  
To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,  
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win  
Great numbers of each nation to receive  
With joy the tidings brought from Heav'n: at length  
Their Ministry perform'd, and race well run, 505  
Their doctrine and their story written left,  
They die. But in their room, as they forewarn,  
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves!  
Who all the sacred mysteries of Heav'n,  
To their own vile advantages shall turn, 510  
Of lucre and ambition; and the truth  
With superstitions and traditions taint,  
Left only in those written records pure,  
Though not but by the Spirit understood.  
Then shall they seek t' avail themselves of names, 515  
Places, and titles; and with these to join  
Secular pow'r, though feigning still to act  
By spiritual: to themselves appropriating  
The Spirit of God, promis'd alike and giv'n  
To all believers: and from that pretence 520  
Spiritual laws by carnal pow'r shall force  
On every conscience; laws which none shall find



Left them inroll'd; or what the Spirit within  
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then  
But force the Spirit of grace itself, and bind 525  
His consort liberty? what, but unbuild  
His living temples, built by faith to stand,  
Their own faith, not another's? for on earth  
Who against faith and conscience can be heard  
Infallible? Yet many will presume: 530  
Whence heavy persecution shall arise  
On all who in the worship persevere  
Of spirit and truth: the rest, far greater part,  
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms  
Religion satisfy'd; truth shall retire 535  
Bestuck with slanderous darts; and works of faith  
Rarely be found. So shall the world go on,  
To good malignant, to bad men benign;  
Under her own weight groaning; till the day  
Appear of respiration to the just, 540  
And vengeance to the wicked: at return  
Of Him so lately promis'd to thy aid,  
The Woman's Seed; obscurely then foretold,  
Now amplier known thy Saviour, and thy Lord;  
Last in the clouds from Heav'n to be reveal'd 545  
In glory of the Father, to dissolve  
Satan with his perverted world; then raise  
From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,  
New Heav'ns, new Earth, ages of endless date,  
Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love, 550  
To bring forth fruits, joy, and eternal bliss.

He ended, and thus Adam last reply'd.  
How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest!  
Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,  
Till time stand fix'd? Beyond is all abyss, 555  
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach!  
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,  
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill  
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain,

Beyond



Beyond which was my folly to aspire. 560  
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,  
And love with fear the only God; to walk  
As in his presence, ever to observe  
His providence, and on him sole depend,  
Merciful over all his works, with good 565  
Still overcoming evil; and by small  
Accomplishing great things: by things deem'd weak  
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise  
By simply meek: that suffering for truth's sake  
Is fortitude to highest victory, 570  
And to the faithful Death the gate of Life:  
Taught this by his example whom I now  
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.

To whom thus also th' Angel last reply'd:  
This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum 575  
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars  
Thou knew'st by name, and all th' ethereal powr's,  
All secrets of the deep, all nature's works,  
Or works of God in Heav'n, air, earth, or sea,  
And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst, 580  
And all the rule, one empire: only add  
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,  
Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,  
By name to come call'd Charity, the soul  
Of all the rest, then wilt thou not be loath 585  
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess  
A Paradise within thee, happier far.—  
Let us descend now therefore from this top  
Of speculation, for the hour precise  
Exacts our parting hence: and see the guards 590  
By me incamp'd on yonder hill, expect  
Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,  
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round.  
We may no longer stay: go! waken Eve:  
Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd, 595  
Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd



To meek submission: thou at season fit  
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard:  
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,  
 The great deliverance by her seed to come, 600  
 For by the woman's seed, on all mankind.  
 That ye may live, which will be many days,  
 Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,  
 With cause for evils past, yet much more chear'd  
 With meditation on the happy end. 605

He ended, and they both descend the hill:  
 Descended, Adam to the bow'r where Eve  
 Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak'd,  
 And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd.  
 Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;  
 For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise;  
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good  
 Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress  
 Wearied I fell asleep: but now lead on!

In me is no delay; with thee to go, 615  
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,  
 Is to go hence unwilling: thou to me  
 Art all things under Heav'n, all places thou,  
 Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.  
 This further consolation yet secure 620  
 I carry hence; though all by me is lost,  
 Such favor I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,  
 By me the promis'd seed shall all restore.

So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard  
 Well pleas'd, but answer'd not: for now too nigh 625  
 Th' Arch-Angel stood; and from the other hill  
 To their fix'd station, all in bright array  
 The Cherubim descended; on the ground  
 Gliding meteorous, as ev'ning mist  
 Ris'n from a river, o'er the marish glides; 630  
 And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel  
 Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd  
 The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd;

Fierce



Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,  
 And vapors as the Libyan air adust, 635  
 Began to parch that temperate clime: whereat  
 In either hand the hast'ning Angel caught  
 Our ling'ring parents, and to th' eastern gate  
 Led them direct; and down the cliff as fast  
 To the subjected plain; then disappear'd. 640  
 They looking back, all th' eastern side beheld  
 Of Paradise, so late their happy seat!  
 Wav'd over by that flaming brand; the gate  
 With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms.  
 Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon:  
 The world was all before them, where to chuse  
 Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.  
 They, hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,  
 Through Eden took their solitary way.

# THE END.



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